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PRIVATE

CORRESPONDENCE

OF

DAVID HUME

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WITH

SEVERAL DISTINGUISHED PERSONS,

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1761 AND 1776.

NOW FIRST PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINALS.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE History of England, by David Hume, has been aptly styled the "History of English Passions, by Human Reason." It displays alike the learning, the judgment and the impartiality of its celebrated author: but it conveys little idea of his private character, of his equanimity, of the cheerfulness, and even playfulness of his disposition, and of the habits of his life. These are to be learnt only from his Private Correspondence, which, not being intended for the public eye, reveals the man, and betrays his individuality.

The following Correspondence, which the Editor feels himself particularly fortunate in having obtained, comprehends a period of sixteen years, that is, from 1761 to 1776. It consists principally of letters written by David Hume to the Countess de Boufflers, and the Marchioness of Barbantane, at Paris; of various others, by the celebrated J. J. Rousseau, the Countess de Boufflers, the Earl Marshal of Scotland, &c.

The Letters, written by Hume to the Countess de Boufflers, are forty in number; and, independent of coming from the pen of the celebrated Historian, and referring to one of the most interesting periods of the last century, viz. the end of the reign of Louis XV. in France, and the beginning of the long and eventful reign of George III. in England, they derive an increased interest from the person to whom they are addressed.

The Countess de Boufflers-Rouvrel was not less celebrated for the beauty of her person, than for the uncommon powers of her mind, the sprightliness of her wit, and the extent of her information. On her entrance into public life, after her marriage, she became the companion of the Duchess of Orleans, the Grandmother of the present Duke. But having had some differences with Her Royal Highness, she left the Princess, and formed a very intimate connexion with the Prince de Conti. Though her accomplishments and the gracefulness of her manners rendered her a principal object of attraction at his Court, she yet found time to write a French tragedy in prose, which, indeed, was neither acted nor printed, but which was highly spoken of by the most distinguished literary characters of the age. To patronize literature and the arts was her delight. She was an enthusiastic admirer of J. J. Rousseau; and zealously attached to Hume, with whom she entered into an epistolary correspondence. The death of the Count de Boufflers, her husband, which happened in the month of October 1764, led her to aspire to the exalted rank of

a Princess. On this occasion Hume gave her the most delicate advice; and afterwards, by his cheering philosophy, supported her under her disappointment. She twice visited England. Her son was educated in Holland, at the Protestant University of Leyden. He gave very great hopes, but must not be confounded with his relation the witty Chevalier de Boufflers, who was the youngest son of the Marquis de Boufflers-Rémiencourt, and whose mother enjoyed the tender regard of Stanislaus, King of Poland, and Duke of Lorraine.

The letters to the Marchioness de Barbantane, as well as those to the Countess de Boufflers, confirm the circumstance which caused so much surprise to the Baron de Grimm, that all the pretty women of France were fond of Hume, and that the stout Scotch philosopher appeared highly delighted with their society. The flattering reception which Hume met with in France from all ranks and persons, and the bitter feuds which prevailed at that period in England between the Whigs and Tories, rendered him so partial to French manners, that he thought them synonimous with politeness itself. It is not, indeed, surprising that a temper, serene and tranquil like his, should have preferred the witty conversation of accomplished Parisian ladies, in their elegant saloons, to the boisterous political discussions of English gentlemen, over their bottles at taverns and coffee-houses, which, in his time, were their places of fashionable resort.

The Editor thinks himself peculiarly fortunate, in having recovered these letters, at a period when the manners of the French before the Revolution are not yet forgotten Every free and impartial delineation of them, as it is confirmed by witnesses, whose evidence gains respect from their years, is a valuable accession, which will enable some future *Hume* to throw a philosophical light upon the violent agitations that succeeded such gentle and refined manners.

The letters written by David Hume to a French gentleman refer to his celebrated quarrel with J. J. Rousseau; but are not among those which Hume published in his *Exposé succinct de la Contestation qui s'est élevée entre M. Hume et M. Rousseau.*

But there is besides, among the original papers, a copy of the letter which Hume wrote to Rousseau, to invite him to England. It is no doubt authentic; yet the Editor did not think himself warranted to insert it in Hume's Private Correspondence, because it is not in his hand-writing. However, as it has never been published, it may perhaps prove acceptable to some readers. It runs thus:

" M. Hume à M. J. J. Rousseau.

" Le commerce de lettres que notre ami commun, Milord Maréchal, m'avoit procuré avec vous, me satisfaisoit trop pour que je n'eusse pas mis tous mes soins à le continuer, si je n'avois craint d'être du nombre de ces importuns, qui sous le prétexte

de vous admirer, ne cessent de vous persécuter par leurs lettres. Une conversation que j'ai eue en dernier lieu avec Madame la Marquise de Verdelin fait revivre en moi l'espérance de pouvoir adoucir votre situation présente, et je me flatte, que vous daignerez accepter mes services. Vos malheurs si singuliers, si constants, doivent, indépendamment de vos vertus et de votre génie, intéresser vivement pour vous toute humaine créature; et je crois pouvoir vous en répondre que vous trouverez en Angleterre une entière sécurité contre la persécution, non seulement par la tolérance de nos loix, mais aussi par le respect que chacun y porte à votre caractère. Avant de vous parler sur ce projet, j'ai voulu être sûr de son exécution. J'ai écrit à un de mes amis, et sa réponse est telle que je la souhaite. Madame de Verdelin vous fera tous les détails. Son avis, et le mien, seroit que vous commençassiez votre voyage le plus tôt possible, tant pour éviter la mauvaise saison, que pour ôter à vos ennemis l'occasion de renouveler leurs injures. J'aurois trouvé un grand plaisir à vous aller joindre en Suisse, pour vous accompagner dans votre voyage: mais ayant été chargé quelque tems ici des affaires publiques, je suis obligé de retourner immédiatement à la Cour de Londres, pour en rendre compte. De là j'irai joindre le Comte de Hertford en Irlande, ci-devant Ambassadeur en France, actuellement Viceroi de ce royaume. La nécessité de ce voyage me privera du plaisir de vous voir en Angleterre avant l'été prochain. Jusques là j'espère que vous me permettrez de

vous commettre aux soins de mon ami; il est digne de devenir le vôtre, et il le désire beaucoup. Son nom est *Elliot;* il demeure à Londres, dans . . . . . Si vous lui faites savoir le moment de votre arrivée, il vous joindra immédiatement, et vous conduira dans la retraite que nous avons choisie. J'espère que vous y trouverez la tranquillité et le bonheur. Le peu de part que vous me permettez d'y prendre, me rendra très heureux, et je compterai cet événement comme un des plus fortunés de ma vie. Les libraires de Londres offrent aux auteurs plus d'argent de leurs ouvrages, que ceux de Paris; ainsi vous pourrez sans peine vivre frugalement du fruit de votre propre travail. Je parle sur ce sujet, parceque je sais, Monsieur, que vous voulez toujours que le genre humain vous soit redevable, et ne rien recevoir de lui."

Translation.

"The epistolary correspondence which the Earl Marshal of Scotland, our mutual friend, has procured me with you, was too gratifying for me not to have been anxious to continue it, had I not been afraid of being ranked among those troublesome persons, who, under the pretence of admiring, have not ceased to persecute you with their letters. A conversation which I lately had with the Marchioness de Verdelin, revives my hopes of being enabled to soften your present situation; and I flatter

myself, that you will kindly accept of my services. Your singular and continued misfortunes must, independent of your virtues and genius, strongly interest every human creature in your behalf; and I think I may safely engage, that you will find in England complete security against persecution; not only on account of the tolerance of our laws, but also on account of the respect which every one in England entertains for your character. But before I mentioned my project to you, I wished to be sure of its execution. I wrote to a friend of mine, and his answer is such as I wished. Madame de Verdelin will acquaint you with the particulars. Her advice, and mine, is, that you should begin your journey as soon as possible, to avoid the bad season, and also to deprive your enemies of the opportunity of renewing their insults. It would have given me great pleasure, if I could have gone to meet you in Switzerland, in order to accompany you on your journey: but having been for some time entrusted with the public affairs here, I am obliged to return immediately to the Court of London, to give an account of what I have done. From London I shall proceed to Ireland, to join the Earl of Hertford; who formerly was our Ambassador in France, and is at present Vice-Roy of that kingdom. The necessity which I am under of performing this journey, will deprive me of the pleasure of seeing you in England before next summer. In the mean time, I hope you will allow me to confide you to the care of my friend; he is worthy to become yours, and he wishes it

very much. His name is Elliot; he lives in London at ..... If you will let him know the moment you expect to arrive, he will be instantly with you, and conduct you to the retreat which we have chosen. I hope you will there find tranquillity and happiness. The small share which you permit me to take in your welfare will render me very happy, and I shall consider this event as one of the most fortunate of my life. The booksellers of London pay authors better for their works than those of Paris; you will therefore easily be enabled to live frugally on the fruits of your own labour. I mention this because I know that you always wish mankind to be indebted to you, without accepting any thing from them."

The letters of the Countess de Boufflers justify all that we before stated, respecting the accomplishments of that Lady. The ease, elegance, and vivacity of their style, and the force of their reasoning, place them almost on the same line with the celebrated letters of Madame de Sévigné.

In her letter to David Hume, the Countess is justly offended at Hume having made the Baron D'Holbach at Paris his first confidant, respecting his quarrel with J. J. Rousseau; and at his not having recommended a strict silence on the subject. His letter to the Baron had been publicly read at a brilliant supper, given by M. Necker; it began with these remarkable words: "*Mon cher Baron, Jean Jacques est un Scélérat.*" The expression was, no doubt, intemperate, and too strong for the

occasion; but Hume had been irritated by Rousseau's letter to him, which began with equally offensive words, viz.: *Vous êtes un traitre; vous ne m'avez mené ici que pour me perdre, aprés m'avoir déshonoré.* The tone of the two epistles, gives a high degree of interest to her Ladyship's sensible letter, and palliates the bitterness of her reproaches.

The letters of the Earl Marshal of Scotland to the Countess de Boufflers, are equally remarkable. His Lordship was the eldest brother of the celebrated Prussian Field Marshal *James Keith*, who was killed in 1758, at the unfortunate affair of *Hockkirchen*, in Saxony. The Earl Marshal was, for several years, Governor of the Principality of Neufchatel, in Switzerland, which belonged to Prussia. The great Frederick was particularly fond of his Lordship's company. His Majesty often invited him to Potsdam; and it was at Potsdam, or in its neighbourhood that the Earl Marshal died in the year 1778 at a very advanced age. Frederick himself, though His Majesty was then engaged in a war with Austria, on account of the Bavarian succession, wrote in his camp the *Eloge de Milord Maréchal*, which was read at a public sitting of the Berlin Academy of Sciences by the Prussian Privy Counsellor *Formey*, its perpetual Secretary. The great Earl of Chatham had visited the Earl Marshal some months before the death of the latter, on which occasion the Earl Marshal jocosely observed, how strange it was *qu'un Ministre du Roi George vienne recevoir les derniers soupirs*

d'un vieux Jacobite. Lord Chatham, however, died in England, a few days before the Earl Marshal breathed his last in Germany.

Of the sixteen original letters of J. J. Rousseau, twelve are addressed to the Countess de Boufflers, in 1762, 1763, 1764, and 1766; one, to the Earl Marshal of Scotland; one, to David Hume; one, to a Mr. Meuron; and one, to General Conway. They all relate, more or less, to Rousseau's stay in England. They bear the characteristic stamp of his genius; and establish, beyond contradiction, the unfortunate suspicious temper of that eccentric and vain, but truly eloquent writer; who, in spite of his philosophy and genius, was completely misled by his worthless housekeeper. His letters are, however, of a peculiar interest. Men who have acquired great celebrity should be thoroughly known, that their doctrines, and the parts which they have acted in public, may be compared with their individual character and private conduct. Their statues, indeed, deserve little respect, if the honors that have been paid to them were not sanctioned by truth.

☞ The Originals may be inspected at the Publishers'.

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PRIVATE

CORRESPONDENCE,

&c. &c.

DAVID HUME TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

MADAM, *Edinburgh*, 15 *May*, 1761.

IT is not easy for your Ladyship to imagine the pleasure I received from the letter, with which you have so unexpectedly honoured me, nor the agreeable visions of vanity, in which, upon that occasion, I indulged myself. I concluded, and, as I fancied, with certainty, that a person, who could write so well herself, must certainly be a good judge of writing in others; and that an author, who could please a lady of your distinction, educated in the court of France, and familiarized with every thing elegant and polite, might reasonably pretend to some degree of merit, and might presume to take his rank above the middling historians. But, Madam, it is but fair, that

I, who have pretended, in so long a work, to do justice to all parties and persons, should also do some to myself; and should not feed my vanity with chimeras, which, I am sensible in my cooler moments, can have no foundation in reason. When I had the pleasure of passing some time in France, I had the agreeable experience of the polite hospitality, by which your nation is distinguished; and I now find, that the same favourable indulgence has appeared in your Ladyship's judgment of my writings. And, perhaps, your esteem for the entire impartiality which I aim at, and which, to tell the truth, is so unusual in English historians, has made your Ladyship overlook many defects, into which the want of art or genius has betrayed me.

In this particular, Madam, I must own, that I am inclined to take your civilities in their full latitude, and to hope that I have not fallen much short of my intentions. The spirit of faction, which prevails in this country, and which is a natural attendant on civil liberty, carries every thing to extremes on the one side, as well as on the other: and I have the satisfaction to find, that my performance has alternately given displeasure to both parties. I could not reasonably hope to please both: such success is impossible from the nature of things; and next to your Ladyship's approbation, who, as a foreigner, must necessarily be a candid judge, I shall always regard the anger of both as the surest warrant of my impartiality.

As I find that you are pleased to employ your leisure-hours in the perusal of history, I shall presume to recommend to your

Ladyship a late work of this kind, wrote by my friend and countryman, Dr. Robertson, which has met with the highest approbation from all good judges.

It is the history of Scotland during the age of the unfortunate Queen Mary; and it is wrote in an elegant, agreeable, and interesting manner, and far exceeding, I shall venture to say, any performance of that kind that has appeared in English. The failings of that Princess are not covered over; but her singular catastrophe is rendered truly lamentable and tragical; and the reader cannot forbear shedding tears for her fate, at the same time that he blames her conduct. There are few historical productions, where both the subject and execution have appeared so happy.

Some prospect is now given us, that this miserable war between the two nations is drawing towards a period, and that the former intercourse between them will again be renewed. If this happy event take place, I have entertained hopes that my affairs will permit me to take a journey to Paris; and the obliging offer, which you are pleased to make me, of allowing me to pay my respects to you, will prove a new and very powerful inducement to make me hasten the execution of my purpose.

But I give your Ladyship warning, that I shall, on many accounts, stand in need of your indulgence. I passed a few years in France during my early youth; but I lived in a provincial town, where I enjoyed the advantages of leisure for study, and an opportunity of learning the language: what I had imper-

fectly learned, long disuse, I am afraid, has made me forget: I have rusted amid books and study; have been little engaged in the active, and not much in the pleasurable scenes of life; and am more accustomed to a select society than to general companies.

But all these disadvantages, and much greater, will be abundantly compensated by the honour of your Ladyship's protection; and I hope that my profound sense of your obliging favours will render me not altogether unworthy of it.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest respect,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's most obedient,

and most humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

MADAM, *London, 2nd September*, 1761.

THE instance which your Ladyship has been pleased to give me of your goodness, is so extraordinary and so honourable to me, that it will be in vain for me to attempt expressing the sense of gratitude, with which I am affected. I must always fall short of the just acknowledgments, which I

owe on that occasion. My only resource must be to take advantage of the prepossessions, which, I find, your Ladyship has entertained in my favour; and to leave it to your own conjecture, how much a person, who has any sentiments of virtue or sound notion of duty, must be moved by a mark of distinction, conferred with such obliging circumstances.

I am afraid that the present situation of public affairs between the two kingdoms sets at a distance the prospect, which I entertained, of being able to enjoy the company of a person so celebrated for her accomplishments by all who have any knowledge of the court of France. But if peace, a blessing so desirable to both nations, should be restored to us, and if I can find leisure and an opportunity for a journey to Paris, your Ladyship will easily believe, that I understand my own interests too well not to cultivate every day an acquaintance, which must appear to me so valuable. But as I am sensible, that I shall, in many respects, stand in need of your indulgence, you must excuse me, if I be solicitous to avoid giving you any superfluous trouble, and decline, though with all imaginable sense of gratitude, the obliging offer, with which you have been pleased to honour me.

I am, with the greatest regard,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's most obedient

and most obliged Servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

MADAM, *Edinburgh, 1st July*, 1762.

HAD I the least propensity towards superstition, the incident your Ladyship mentions, would have revived that passion in me; and I should certainly have imagined, that I was secretly attended by a fairy, a sylph, or a good genius, who knew my inmost purposes, and was industrious to prevent my most earnest intentions from being frustrated. I was a short time in London last autumn, when I gave that work to the press which your Ladyship is pleased to mention; and having a great ambition that it should be conveyed to your hands, I spoke to more than one person to point out to me some sure method for that purpose, but was not able to satisfy myself before I was obliged to leave England. In this part of the world, I found that the war laid me under still greater difficulties to procure a safe conveyance to Paris. But whether any of my friends, who knew the uneasiness, which I had felt from these disappointments, has been more happy in fulfilling my intentions, is, what I shall make it my business to enquire; and I surely owe him, whoever he be, the greatest obligations for executing in my behalf, a duty which I was so earnest to perform, and which nothing but

obstructions, arising from these unhappy hostilities between the two nations, could have prevented me from having the honour to fulfil.

But, Madam, what new wonder is this which your letter presents to me? I not only find a Lady, who, in the bloom of beauty and height of reputation, can withdraw herself from the pleasures of a gay court, and find leisure to cultivate the sciences; but deigns to support a correspondence with a man of letters in a remote country, and to reward his labours by a suffrage the most agreeable of all others, to a man who has any spark of generous sentiments or taste for true glory. Besides these unusual circumstances, I find a Lady, who, without any other advantages than her own talents, has made herself mistress of a language commonly esteemed very difficult to strangers, and possesses it to such a degree as might give jealousy to us who have made it the business of our lives to acquire and cultivate it.

I cannot but congratulate my country on this incident, which marks the progress made by its literature and reputation in foreign countries.

My vanity would also suggest to me some share in this happy event, did I not reflect, that your Ladyship's partiality towards my feeble writings, has proceeded entirely from the spirit of disinterestedness which I endeavoured to maintain in composing them. But the more I must abate of self-conceit on the occasion, the more I find myself obliged to re-double my sentiments of

gratitude and respect towards your Ladyship, who have been pleased to confer so great an honour upon me.

I am, with the truest regard,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's most obedient

and most humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

P. S. So far I had wrote in answer to your Ladyship's of the 29th of May, when I was again honoured with your's of the 14th of June. Good God! Madam, how much I regret my being absent from London on this occasion, which deprives me of an opportunity of shewing in person my regard for your recommendation, and my esteem, I had almost said veneration, for the virtue and genius of M. Rousseau. I assure your Ladyship there is no man in Europe of whom I have entertained a higher idea, and whom I would be prouder to serve; and as I find his reputation very high in England, I hope every one will endeavour to make him sensible of it by civilities, and by services, as far as he will accept of them. I revere his greatness of mind, which makes him fly obligations and dependance; and I have the vanity to think, that through the course of my life I have endeavoured to resemble him in those maxims.

But as I have some connexions with men of rank in London,

I shall instantly write to them, and endeavour to make them sensible of the honour M. Rousseau has done us in choosing an asylum in England. We are happy at present in a king, who has a taste for literature; and I hope M. Rousseau will find the advantage of it, and that he will not disdain to receive benefits from a great monarch, who is sensible of his merit. I am only afraid that your friend will find his abode in England not so agreeable as may be wished, if he does not possess the language, which I am afraid is the case: for I never could observe in his writings any marks of his acquaintance with the English tongue. The French nation will soon regret the loss of so great a man, and will be sensible that it is some dishonour to them to have lost him. We were in hopes that philosophical liberty had made greater advances in that country; and such of us as have indulged the freedom of the pen, had need be careful how they intrust their persons to such as profess these rigorous maxims, and do not think that any indulgence is even due to foreigners. I assure your Ladyship that this reflection gives me some uneasiness; but I will not allow myself to think that I shall always be condemned to admire you at a distance, and that I shall never have an opportunity of enjoying that conversation, of whose charms I have heard such frequent accounts.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Yverdun, le 4 Juillet, 1762.

TOUCHÉ de l'intérêt que vous prenez à mon sort, je voulais vous écrire, Madame, et je le voudrais plus que jamais; mais ma situation, toujours empirée, me laisse à peine un moment à dérober aux soins les plus indispensables. Peut-être dans deux jours serai-je forcé de partir d'ici; et tandis que j'y reste, je vous réponds qu'on ne m'y laisse pas sans occupation. Il faut attendre que je puisse respirer, pour vous rendre compte de moi. Mademoiselle Le Vasseur m'aurait déjà parlé de vos bontés pour elle, et de celles de M. le Prince de Conti. J'emporte en mon cœur tous les sentimens qu'elles m'ont inspirés: —puissent des jours moins orageux m'en laisser jouir plus à mon aise!

Vous m'étonnez, Madame, en me reprochant mon indignation contre le Parlement de Paris. Je le regarde comme une troupe d'enfans étourdis, qui dans leurs jeux font, sans le savoir, beaucoup de mal aux hommes; mais cela n'empêche pas qu'en ne l'accusant envers moi que d'iniquité, je ne me sois servi du mot le plus doux qu'il était possible. Puisque vous avez lu le livre, vous savez bien, Madame, que le réquisitoire de l'Avocat-Général n'est qu'un tissu de calomnies, qui ne pourraient sauver,

que par leur bêtise, le châtiment dû à l'auteur quand il ne serait qu'un particulier. Que doit-ce être d'un homme, qui ose employer le sacré caractère de la magistrature, à faire le métier qu'il devrait punir ?

C'est cependant sur ce libelle, qu'on se hâte de me juger dans toute l'Europe, avant que le livre y soit parvenu. C'est sur ce libelle que, sans m'assigner ni m'entendre, on a commencé par me décréter, à Genève, de prise de corps ; et quand enfin mon livre y est arrivé, sa lecture y a causé l'émotion, la fermentation qui y règne encore, à tel point que le magistrat désavoue son décret, nie même qu'il l'ait porté, et a refusé à la requête de ma famille la communication du jugement rendu, en conseil, à cette occasion. Procédé qui n'eut peut-être jamais d'exemple, depuis qu'il existe des tribunaux.

Il est vrai que le crédit de M. de Voltaire à Genève a beaucoup contribué à cette violence et à cette précipitation. C'est à l'instigation de M. de Voltaire qu'on y a vengé, contre moi, la cause de Dieu. Mais, à Berne, où le même réquisitoire a été imprimé dans la Gazette, il y a produit un tel effet que je sais de M. le Bailli même qu'il attend peut-être de demain l'ordre de me faire sortir des terres de la République ; et je puis dire, qu'il le craint. Je sais bien que quand mon livre sera parvenu à Berne, il y excitera la même indignation, qu'à Genève, contre l'auteur du réquisitoire ; mais, en attendant, je serai chassé ; l'on ne voudra pas s'en dédire ; et quand on le voudroit, il ne me conviendroit pas de revenir. Ainsi successivement on me refu-

sera partout l'air et l'eau. Voilà l'effet de ces procédures si régulières, dont vous voulez que j'admire l'équité.

Vous pouvez bien juger, Madame, que toutes ces circonstances ne peuvent que me rendre encore plus précieuses les offres de Madame ———; et si j'ai l'honneur d'être connu de vous, vous pourrez aisément lui faire comprendre à quel point j'en suis touché. Mais, Madame, où est ce château? Faut-il encore faire des voyages—moi, qui ne puis plus me traîner? Non; dans l'état où je suis, il ne me reste qu'à me laisser chasser de frontière en frontière jusqu'à ce que je ne puisse plus aller. Alors le dernier fera de moi ce qu'il lui plaira. A l'égard de l'Angleterre, vous jugez bien qu'elle est désormais pour moi comme l'autre monde; je ne la reverrai de mes jours.

Je devrais maintenant vous parler de vos propres offres, Madame, de ma reconnaissance, du Chevalier de Lorenzi, de Miss Becquet, et de mille autres choses qui, dans vos bontés pour moi, m'importent à vous dire. Mais voilà du monde, le papier me manque, et la poste partira bientôt:—il faut finir, pour aujourd'hui.

(TRANSLATION.)

Yverdun, July 4, 1762.

PENETRATED with the interest which you take in my destiny, I have long wished to write to you, Madam, and I wish it now more than ever; but my situation, daily more deplorable, scarcely leaves me a single moment, which I can spare from cares of the most indispensable nature. Perhaps, in the course of two days, I shall be compelled to depart from this place; and whilst I remain here, I assure you that my enemies do not leave me without occupation. I must wait till I can breathe freely, before I can give you an account of myself. Mademoiselle Le Vasseur has already informed me of your kindness towards her, as well as of that of the Prince of Conti. I treasure up in my heart every sentiment which such goodness has inspired:—Would to Heaven that less tempestuous days would permit me to enjoy the same more at my ease!

You astonish me, Madam, when you reproach me with my indignation against the Parliament of Paris. I regard this assembly as a troop of hair-brained children, who in their sports do, without intending it, much mischief to their fellow-creatures.

However, when I only accuse them of injustice towards myself, I use the mildest term which it was possible for me to do. Since you have read the book, you must be aware, Madam, that the statement of the Attorney-General is one unvaried tissue of calumnies, the stupidity of which alone could save their author from chastisement, were he a mere private individual. What then ought to be the punishment of a man, who dares pervert the sacred character of a magistrate, in order himself to carry on the practice which it is his duty to punish?

It is nevertheless on this libel that all Europe hastens to judge me, before my book shall have reached it. It is upon this libel that, without citing or hearing me, they have issued a warrant of arrest against me, at Geneva; and when at last my book arrived there, its perusal has caused the agitation which still reigns in that city, to such a degree, that the magistrate disavows his warrant, denies even that he had granted it, and has refused the request made by my family for a communication of the judgment pronounced, in council, on this occasion—a mode of procedure, which perhaps has never had its parallel, since the existence of tribunals.

True is it, that the credit of M. Voltaire, at Geneva, has greatly contributed to this act of violence and precipitation. It is at the instigation of M. Voltaire, that the cause of God has been avenged there upon me. But at Berne, where the same statement has been printed in the Gazette, it has produced such an effect, that I know, on the authority of the Landamman him-

self, that he expects to receive, perhaps to-morrow, the order for my expulsion from the territory of the republic, and I may add, that he apprehends it. I am well persuaded that, when my book shall make its appearance at Berne, it will excite the same indignation there, as at Geneva, against the author of the statement; but, in the mean time, I shall be expelled: the magistracy will not feel inclined to revoke their sentence; and if they even did, it would not become me to return. Thus shall I be successively everywhere interdicted air and water. Such is the result of these most regular proceedings, the equity of which you call upon me to admire.

You may well conceive, Madam, that all these circumstances can only tend to render still more precious to me the offers of Madam ———— ; and if I have the honour of being known to you, you will easily enable her to form a just estimate of the deep impression they have made upon me. But, Madam, where is this castle? Must I again set out upon my travels—I who am no longer able to crawl? No; in my actual situation, nothing remains for me but to suffer myself to be driven, from frontier to frontier, till I can go no further. And then the last, into whose hands I shall fall, may do with me as seemeth him good. With respect to England, you will allow that this country is henceforth for me the same as the world to come. I shall never see it again whilst I live.

At present I ought to speak of your own offers, Madam, of my gratitude, of the Chevalier de Lorenzi, of Miss Beckett, and

of a thousand other topics, which your goodness to me renders me extremely anxious to discuss with you. But I am interrupted; I am at the end of my paper, and the post will set off speedily: I must therefore conclude for to-day.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Motiers Travers, le 27 Juillet, 1762.

J'AI enfin le plaisir, Madame, d'avoir ici Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, et j'apprends d'elle à combien de nouveaux titres je dois être pénétré de reconnoissance pour les bienfaits que M. le Prince de Conti a versés sur cette pauvre fille, pour les soins bien plus précieux dont il a daigné l'honorer, et surtout, Madame, pour tout ce que vous avez fait pour elle et pour moi, dans ces momens si tristes et si peu prévus. Pourquoi faut-il que la détresse et l'oppression qui resserrent mon cœur le ferment encore à l'effusion des sentimens dont il est pénétré? Tout est encore en dedans, Madame, mais tout y est, et vous m'avez fait encore plus de bien que vous ne pensez.

La réponse du Roi n'est point encore venue, sur l'asyle que j'ai cherché dans ses états, et j'ignore quels seront ses ordres à mon égard. Après ce qui vient de m'arriver à Berne, je ne dois me croire en sureté nulle part, et j'avoue que sans la nécessité qui m'y force, ce n'est pas ici que je la serois venu chercher, quelque plaisir que me fasse Mademoiselle Le V———.

Surcroît d'embarras, s'il faut fuir encore, et moi qui ne sais plus ni où, ni comment, il ne me reste qu'à m'abandonner à la Providence, et à me jetter tête baissée dans mon destin. L'argent ne me manquera pas, par le soin que l'on a pris de ma bourse, et par ce qu'on a mis dans la sienne; mais l'indigence pourroit augmenter mes infortunes, sans que l'argent les puisse adoucir, et je n'ai jamais été si misérable que quand j'étois le plus riche. J'ai toujours ouï dire que l'or étoit bon à tout, sans l'avoir jamais trouvé bon à rien.

Vous ne sauriez concevoir à quel point le réquisitoire de ce Fleury a effarouché tous nos ministres, et ceux-ci sont les plus remuans de tous. Ils ne me voient qu'avec horreur: ils prennent beaucoup sur eux pour me souffrir dans les temples. Spinoza, Diderot, Voltaire, Helvétius, sont des Saints auprès de moi. Il y a presque un raccommodement avec le parti philosophique, pour me poursuivre de concert; les dévots ouvertement, les philosophes en secret, par leurs intrigues, toujours en gémissant tout haut sur mon sort. Le poëte Voltaire, et le jongleur Tronchin, ont admirablement joué leur rôle, à Genève et à Berne. Nous verrons si je prévois juste, mais j'ai peine à croire qu'on me laisse tranquille où je suis. Cependant jusqu'ici Milord Maréchal paroît m'y voir de bon œil. J'ai reçu hier, sous la date et le timbre de Metz, d'un prétendu Baron de Corval, une lettre à mourir de rire, laquelle sent son Voltaire à pleine gorge. Je ne puis résister, Madame, à l'envie de vous transcrire quel-

ques articles de la lettre de M. le Baron ; j'espère qu'elle vous amusera.

" Je voudrois pouvoir vous adresser, sans frais, deux de mes ouvrages. Le premier est un plan d'éducation tel que je l'ai conçu. Il n'approche pas de l'excellence du vôtre, mais jusqu'à vous j'étois le seul qui pût se flatter d'approcher le but de plus près. La 2e est votre Héloïse, dont j'ai fait une comédie, en trois actes, en prose, le mois de Décembre dernier. Je l'ai communiquée à gens d'esprit, surtout aux premiers acteurs de notre théâtre Messin. Tous l'ont trouvée digne de celui de Paris ; elle est de sentiment, dans le goût de celles de feu M. Delachaussée. Je l'ai adressée à M. Du Bois, premier commis en chef des bureaux de l'Artillerie et du Génie, il y a trois mois, sans que j'en reçoive aucune réponse, je ne sais pourquoi. Si j'eusse connu l'intérieur de votre excellent cœur, comme à présent, et que j eusse su votre adresse à Paris, ç'auroit été à vous à qui je l'aurois adressée, pour la corriger, et la faire recevoir aux Français, à mon profit.

" J'ai une proposition à vous faire. Je vous demande le même service que vous avez reçu du vicaire Savoyard ; c'est-à-dire, de me recevoir chez vous, sans pension, pour deux ans : me loger, nourrir, éclairer, et chauffer. Vous êtes le seul, qui puissiez me conduire de toutes façons à la félicité, et m'apprendre à mourir. Mon excès d'humanité et de compatibilité inséparable m'a engagé à cautionner un militaire, pour 3200

livres. En établissant mes enfans, je ne me suis réservé qu'une pension de 1500 livres—la voilà plus qu'absorbée pour deux ans. C'est ce qui me force à partager votre pain, pendant cet intervalle. Vous n'aurez pas sujet de vous plaindre de moi: je suis très-sobre; je n'aime que les légumes, et fort peu la viande. Je n'enchéris pour tout que la soupe, à laquelle je suis habitué deux fois par jour. Je mange de tout, mais jamais de ragoûts faits dans le cuivre, ni de ces ragoûts raffinés, qui empoisonnent.

" Je vous préviens que la suite d'une chute m'a rendu sourd; cependant j'entends très-bien de l'oreille gauche, sans qu'on hausse la voix, pourvu qu'on me parle doucement, et de près à cette oreille. De loin j'entends avec la plus grande facilité, par des signes très-faciles que je vous apprendrai, ainsi qu'à vos amis. Je ne suis point curieux; je ne questionne jamais; j'attends qu'on ait la bonté de me faire part de la conversation."

Toute la lettre est sur le même ton. Vous me direz qu'il n'y a là qu'une folle plaisanterie. J'en conviens; mais je vois qu'en plaisantant cet honnête homme s'occupe de moi continuellement, et, Madame, cela ne vaut rien. Je suis convaincu qu'on ne me laissera vivre en paix sur la terre, que quand il m'aura oublié.

Depuis quinze jours je me mets souvent en devoir d'écrire au Chevalier, et toujours quelque soin pressant m'en empêche; et même à présent que je voulois vous parler de vous, Madame, de Madame la Maréchale, voilà qu'on vient m'arracher à moi-même, et aux bienfaisantes Divinités que mon cœur adore, pour aller, en vrai

Manichéen, servir celles qui peuvent me nuire, sans pouvoir jamais me faire aucun bien.

(TRANSLATION.)

Motiers Travers, 27th July, 1762.

I HAVE at length the pleasure of being joined by Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, and I learn from her how many additional reasons I have for being penetrated with gratitude for the benefits, which the Prince of Conti has heaped upon this poor girl; for the attentions, far more precious still, with which he has deigned to honour her, and above all, Madam, for all that you have done for her, and for me, at a conjuncture so inauspicious and so little foreseen. Why is it that the distress and the oppression, which contract my heart, should render it incapable likewise of giving vent to the effusion of the sentiments with which it is penetrated? Every thing is still within, Madam; but there every thing remains, and you have done me still more good than you are aware of.

The answer of the King is not yet come to hand, respecting the asylum which I have sought in his states; and I am ignorant what will be his orders relative to me. After what I have experienced at Berne, I ought not to consider myself in safety any where, and I avow, that were it not for the necessity which

forced me hither, this is not the place to which I should have repaired in quest of it, great as is the pleasure I receive from the society of Mademoiselle Le Vasseur. Augmentation of embarrassment, if I must again betake me to flight—I, who know neither whither, nor how. Nothing now remains for me but to abandon myself to Providence, and to follow blindfolded the behests of my fate. Money I shall not lack, thanks to the care which friends have taken of my purse, and to what has been put into hers. But indigence might augment my misfortunes, without its being in the power of money to alleviate them; and I have never found myself so wretched, as when I was most opulent. I have heard say, that gold was good for every thing, without having once found it good for any thing.

You cannot conceive, Madam, to what a point the requisition of this Fleury has infuriated all our clergy, and these are the most turbulent of all. They behold me with horror; it is with great reluctance they suffer me to enter their temples. Spinoza, Diderot, Voltaire, Helvetius, are saints, compared to me. They have nearly come to an accord with the philosophical party, to persecute me conjointly and in concert; the bigots openly; the philosophers in secret, by their intrigues, constantly sighing aloud over my fate. The poet Voltaire, and the juggler Tronchin, have played their part to admiration at Geneva and at Berne. Time will shew whether I am right in my forebodings; but I find it difficult to believe, that I shall be suffered to remain quietly where I am. However, hitherto

My Lord Marshal appears to view me with a favourable eye. I received yesterday a letter, dated from and bearing the post-office mark of Metz, from a pretended Baron de Colval; it is enough to make one die with laughing, and betrays Voltaire in every line. I cannot resist, Madam, the desire I have to transcribe some passages from the self-same letter of the Baron. I hope they will amuse you.

"I wish I had it in my power to transmit you, free of expence, two of my works. The first is a system of education, such as I have conceived it. It does not approach to the excellence of yours; but, till you appeared, I was the only person, who could flatter himself with having attained the nearest to the object in view. The second is your *Héloïse*, of which I have made a comedy, in three acts, in prose, in the month of December last. I have communicated it to persons of talent, more especially to the principal actors of our Metz Theatre. They have all pronounced it worthy of that of Paris; it is of the sentimental cast, in the taste of those of the late M. Delachaussée. I have addressed it, three months ago, to M. Du Bois, head secretary of the boards of Ordnance and Engineers, without having received an answer concerning it, the cause of which I cannot conceive. Had I known the interior of your excellent heart, as I now do, and had I been acquainted with your address in Paris, it is to you that I should have forwarded it, praying you to correct it, and to cause it to be brought out at the national theatre for my benefit.

"I have a proposal to make you. I request the same service from you, which you have received from the Vicar in Savoy, that is to say, to receive me in your house, without remuneration, for two years; to furnish me with lodging, board, fire and candle. You are the only person, who can conduct me, in every respect, to felicity, and teach me to die. The excess of my humanity, with its inseparable compatibility, has induced me to become bail for an officer, in the sum of 3,200 livres. In settling my children in life, I have reserved for myself no more than a pension of 1500 livres—which you see is absorbed for upwards of two years. It is this circumstance which compels me to share your bread, during the said interval. You will have no cause to complain of me: I am very temperate; I like nothing but vegetables, and am very little fond of meat. I can dispense with almost every thing, except soup, which I am in the habit of taking twice a day. I eat every thing, but never ragouts dressed in copper vessels, nor those refined ragouts, which poison.

"I apprize you, that I am become deaf, in consequence of a fall: nevertheless I hear very well with the left ear, without its being necessary to elevate the voice, provided that one speak slowly, and close to this ear. At a distance I maintain a conversation, with the greatest facility, by means of signs, which are very easy to learn, and which I will teach you, as well as your friends. I am not curious; I never ask questions; I expect

that people should have the complaisance to communicate to me whatever passes in the course of conversation."

The whole of the letter is in the same strain. You will tell me, that all this is nothing more than a silly joke. Granted; but I perceive that even in joking this worthy man makes me his continual theme and object, and this, Madam, tends to no good purpose. I am convinced that I never shall be suffered to live in peace on this earth, till this man shall have forgotten me.

For these fifteen days past, I have repeatedly taken up my pen to write to the Chevalier, and every time some urgent business has prevented me. At this present moment even, when it was my wish to converse with you, Madam, concerning yourself, concerning Madame la Marechale, I am interrupted by intruders, who tear me away from myself, and from the beneficent divinities whom my soul adores, to join, like a true Manichean, in the worship of those, who may do me harm, without ever having the power of doing me the slightest good.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS, RUE NOTRE DAME DE NAZARETH, PROCHE LE TEMPLE, A PARIS.

A Motiers Travers, le 20 *Août*, 1762.

J'ai reçu dans leur tems, Madame, vos deux lettres des 21 et 31 Juillet, avec l'extrait, par duplicata, d'un

P. S. de M. Hume, que vous y avez joint. L'estime de cet homme rare, peut-être unique, efface bien des outrages. Il avoit toute la mienne, avant même que je vous entendisse parler de lui, et vos sentimens sur son compte l'ont augmentée, en l'éclairant. M. Hume est le plus vrai philosophe que je connoisse, et le seul historien qui jamais ait écrit avec impartialité. Il n'a pas plus aimé la vérité que moi, j'ose le croire ; mais j'ai mis quelquefois de la passion dans mes recherches, et lui n'a mis dans les siennes que ses lumières et son beau génie. L'amour-propre m'a souvent égaré, par mon aversion même pour ce qui étoit mal, ou me sembloit l'être. J'ai haï le despotisme, en républicain, et l'intolérance, en théiste. M. Hume a dit : Voilà ce que fait l'intolérance ; ce que fait le despotisme. Il a vu par toutes ses faces l'objet que la passion ne m'a laissé voir que par un côté. Il a mesuré, calculé les erreurs des hommes, en être au-dessus de leurs foiblesses. J'ai cent fois désiré, et je désire encore voir l'Angleterre, soit pour elle-même, soit pour y converser avec celui, qui en est maintenant l'honneur, et mériter son amitié. Mais ce projet devient de jour en jour moins praticable, ne fût-ce qu'à cause du plus grand éloignement, et des longs détours qu'il faudroit faire, en ne passant pas par la France. D'ailleurs le séjour de l'Angleterre est très-dispendieux ; et si je n'en tire pas mes ressources, il m'en faudra plus là qu'ailleurs. Quoi qu'en dise M. Hume, je ne crois pas qu'à mon âge, et dans mon état, il me conseillât sérieusement d'aller chercher fortune à la Cour de Londres, lui qui s'y est refusé à celle qui l'alloit chercher. L'ha-

bitude m'a tellement attaché au séjour champêtre, que je me meurs de tristesse aussitôt que je cesse de voir de près des buissons, des arbres. Ce n'est pas là une bonne disposition pour aller humer les noires vapeurs des rues de cette grande ville, dans laquelle il n'est pas sûr que mon dernier ouvrage, et la note sur le *good-natured people*, n'efface pas l'effet de l'Héloïse, qui m'y pouvoit faire espérer un favorable accueil. Il vaut mieux, j'en conviens, dépendre d'un gouvernement que d'un homme, quand on a la liberté du choix ; mais quand on ne veut rien donner à la fortune, il faut commencer par lui ôter le présent, et toutes les prises qu'elle peut avoir sur un homme accoutumé à la mettre au pied. Elle les a sur moi, dès ma jeunesse, et les aura jusqu'à ma mort. Quant à l'édition générale de mes écrits à faire à Londres, c'est une très-bonne idée, surtout si ce projet peut s'exécuter, moi absent. Cependant les frais d'impression sont si grands en Angleterre, que cela ne peut manquer de rendre l'exécution de ce projet plus difficile, et le profit beaucoup moins grand.

Le Château de ———, étant moins éloigné, seroit plus à ma portée, et l'avantage de vivre à bon marché, que je n'ai pas ici, seroit une grande raison de préférence. Mais je ne connois pas assez Monsieur et Madame De la ———, pour savoir s'il me convient de leur avoir cette obligation. C'est à vous, Madame, et à Madame la Maréchale à me décider là-dessus. A l'égard de la situation, je ne connois nul séjour triste et vilain avec de la verdure. Mais s'il n'y a que des sables ou des rochers tout nuds, n'en parlons pas. Au reste, tant que mes pieds pourront me

traîner, je ne serai conduit nulle part par corvée, et quand ils ne me traîneront plus, j'aimerois mieux rester sur la place.

Quant au troisième asile, dont vous me parlez, Madame, je suis très-reconnoissant de cette offre, mais très-décidé à n'en pas profiter. Nous aurons du tems pour délibérer encore sur les autres; car je ne suis point maintenant en état de voyager, et quoique les hivers soient longs et rudes, je suis forcé d'y passer celui-ci, à tout risque, ne pouvant supposer que le Roi de Prusse, dont la réponse n'est point encore venue, m'y refuse l'asile, qu'il a souvent accordé à des gens qui ne le méritoient guères.

Voilà, Madame, quant à présent ce que je puis vous dire sur les soins relatifs à moi, dont vous voulez bien vous occuper. Soyez persuadée que mon sort tient moins à l'effet de ces mêmes soins qu'à l'intérêt qui vous les inspire. La bonté que vous avez de penser à Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, l'autorise à vous assurer de son profond respect. Il n'y a pas de jour qu'elle ne m'attendrisse en me parlant de vous et de vos bontés. Madame, je bénirois un malheur, qui m'a si bien appris à vous connoître, s'il ne m'eût en même tems éloigné de vous.

(TRANSLATION.)

Motiers Travers, 20th August, 1762.

I RECEIVED, in due course of time, Madam, your two letters of the 21st and 31st July, together with two extracts of a *Post-scriptum*, from Mr. Hume, which you inclosed therein. The esteem of so extraordinary a man,—a man, perhaps, without his parallel,—makes amends for many outrages. He possessed all my esteem, before even I heard you speak of him; and your sentiments, respecting him, have augmented it, in placing it in its true light. Mr. Hume is the most genuine philosopher I know of, and the only historian who has ever written with impartiality. He has not been more the lover of truth, I may venture to say, than myself; but I have frequently mingled passion with my researches; whereas his are enhanced by his enlightened conceptions, and his beautiful genius. Self-sufficiency has frequently led me astray, even through my abhorrence of that which was evil, or which to me appeared to be so. I have hated despotism, as a republican; and intolerance, as a theist. Mr. Hume has said: Behold, such are the results of intolerance; such the results of despotism. He has contemplated, in every point of view, what passion has not permitted me to contemplate but from one side. He has measured, has calculated

the errors of mankind, as a being superior to their weaknesses. A hundred times have I desired, and I desire so still, to see England, both on its own account, and to converse with him who now constitutes its proudest boast, and to merit his friendship. But this project becomes every day less practicable; were it even for no other reason than the increased distance, and the lengthened circuitous route, which I must take, in not passing through France. Besides, living is very expensive in England; and if I do not draw my resources from that country, I shall be at greater expence there, than any where else. Whatever Mr. Hume may say on this topic, I cannot believe that, at my age and in my actual position, he would seriously advise me to seek my fortune at the Court of London,—he who turned his back on the fortune which came in quest of him there. Habit has so attached me to a country life, that I die with spleen the moment I am no longer in the immediate vicinity of trees and bushes. This is certainly not a favourable disposition to induce me to travel in order to inhale the black vapours of the streets of this great city, in which it is uncertain whether my last work, and the note relative to the *good-natured people*, may not have effaced the impression of my Héloïse, which might have given me reason to expect a favourable reception. It is better, I admit, to be dependent upon a government than upon an individual, when the alternative is left to our choice. But, when one is not disposed to sacrifice to fortune, one must commence by depriving her of her present hold, and of all the advantages which she may have over

a man accustomed to put her under his foot. She has these holds upon me, from my very youth, and she will have them till my death. As to a complete edition of my works, to be published in London, this is a very excellent idea, especially if the undertaking could be accomplished in my absence. But then the expences of the press are so enormous in England, that they cannot fail to render the execution of this project more difficult, and the profits considerably smaller.

The Castle of———, being at a less distance, would be more convenient for me, and the advantage of living at a cheap rate, which I do not enjoy here, would constitute a grand reason for giving it the preference. But I am not sufficiently acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. —— to ascertain, whether it would be proper for me to be under this obligation to them. It rests with you, Madam, and with Madame la Marechale, to decide for me on this point. As far as concerns the situation, I account no abode sad and gloomy, where there is verdure to be found. But if it presents nothing but plains of sand, and barren rocks, let us talk no more about it. For the rest, as long as my feet shall be able to drag me along, I will not be led any where by task-masters, and when they shall bear me no longer, I would prefer dying on the spot.

With respect to the third asylum, of which you speak, Madam, I am very grateful for this offer, but very decided not to avail myself of it. We shall have ample time to deliberate upon the others; for I am not at this moment in a condition to travel;

and although the winters are long and severe, I am compelled to pass the present here, at all hazards, as I cannot suppose that the king of Prussia, whose answer has not yet come to hand, will refuse me an asylum, which he has frequently granted to persons who scarcely merited it.

The above, Madam, is all that I can at present say on the subject of the kind interest which you are pleased to take in my welfare. Be persuaded that my future fate depends less on your amiable attentions, than on the interest by which they are inspired. Your goodness in remembering Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, authorizes her to assure you of her profound respect. Not a day passes that she does not move me even to tears, in speaking of you and of your good offices. Madam, I should bless a misfortune, which has so well taught me to appreciate your character, if it had not at the same time removed me to a greater distance from you.

M. LE MARECHAL D'ECOSSE, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Neufchâtel, ce 22 Septembre, 1762.

MADAME,

SANS avoir l'honneur de vous être connu, je prends la liberté de m'adresser à vous, pour que vous m'aidiez dans une négociation, plus difficile peut-être que la paix entre la

France et l'Angleterre. Je sais la bonté que vous avez pour M. Rousseau, et le respect qu'il a pour vous. Je voudrois lui rendre service, et le Roi, mon maître, souhaite de rendre son séjour ici aisé. M. Rousseau m'a dit, qu'entre autres malheurs il avoit eu celui de mal calculer; qu'il devoit déjà être mort. Je me suis imaginé qu'il avoit mangé son petit fonds. En parlant de lui au Roi, je lui avois dit cela, entre autres choses. Il me répond: "Votre lettre, mon cher Milord, au sujet de Rousseau, de Genève, m'a fait beaucoup de plaisir. Je vois que nous pensons de même; il faut soulager un malheureux, qu'on ne peut accuser que d'avoir des opinions singulières, mais qu'il croit bonnes."

Le Roi, pour ménager la délicatesse de M. Rousseau, voudroit lui faire donner le vin, le bled, le bois, ses petits besoins, *en nature*, dit le Roi, *qu'il acceptera plutôt que de l'argent*. Il auroit aussi envie de lui faire bâtir un hermitage, avec un jardin, dans la suite.

Je l'attends ici en quelques jours, pour travailler à la conversion d'une honnête et belle âme. Nous espérons la convertir à notre sainte religion Chrétienne. Elle est déjà prévenue en faveur de M. Rousseau. Avec son esprit et éloquence, (et la grace de Dieu surtout) nous viendrons à bout de cette conversion, et M. Rousseau donnera à notre église une nouvelle Chrétienne. Vous direz, Madame, que nous ne ferons qu'une hérétique; mais elle sera de plusieurs degrés plus près de votre église, qu'elle n'étoit quand elle ne croyoit qu'en Mahomet. Et M. Rousseau, poursuivi

comme peu-croyant, deviendra ici un apôtre. J'attendrai votre réponse, avant que de parler à M. Rousseau des intentions du Roi, à son égard.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec respect,

Madame,

Votre très-humble et très-obéissant Serviteur,

(Signé) LE MARECHAL D'ECOSSE.

(TRANSLATION.)

Neufchatel, 22d September, 1762.

MADAM,

WITHOUT having the honour of being personally known to you, I take the liberty of addressing you, to obtain your assistance in a negotiation, involving greater difficulties, perhaps, than the conclusion of peace between France and England. I am apprized of your kind disposition towards Rousseau, as well as of the respect he entertains for you. It is my wish to be of service to him; and the King, my master, is desirous that his abode here should be rendered comfortable. M. Rousseau has told me that, among other disasters, it was his misfortune to have made a wrong calculation; that he ought already to be dead. This has led me to imagine, that he had dissipated his little property. Writing about him to the King, I mentioned this circumstance, among others. His Majesty replied: "Your letter, my dear Lord, relative to Rousseau, of

Geneva, has occasioned me great pleasure. I perceive we are both of the same way of thinking; we must endeavour to comfort an unfortunate man, who can only be accused of entertaining singular opinions, but which he believes to be right.

The King, in order not to wound the delicacy of M. Rousseau, would wish to cause him to be supplied with wine, corn, wood, and other little necessaries, *in kind*, which, as the King observes, Rousseau *will accept sooner than money*. He is moreover desirous to cause a hermitage to be built for him, with a garden, in the sequel.

I expect him here in the course of a few days, to co-operate in the conversion of a fair and ingenuous soul. We are in hopes of converting her to our holy Christian religion. She is already prepossessed in favour of M. Rousseau. Assisted by his genius and eloquence, (and above all, by the grace of God,) we shall accomplish this conversion, and M. Rousseau will give to our church a new Christian. You will tell me, Madam, that we shall only make her a heretic; but even so she will approach, by many degrees, nearer to your church, than when she believed in Mahomet. Again, M. Rousseau, who is now persecuted, as an unbeliever, will become here an apostle. I shall await your answer, before I speak to M. Rousseau concerning the intentions of the King in his favour.

I have the honour to be, with respect,

Madam,

Your very humble and very obedient Servant,

(Signed) THE MARECHAL D'ECOSSE.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Motiers, le 7 Octobre, 1762.

J'ESPERE, Madame, avoir gardé sur les obligeantes offres de Madame De la M———, le secret que vous me recommandez dans votre lettre du 10 Septembre. Cependant comme je n'ai pas un souvenir exact de ce que j'ai pu écrire, je pourrois y avoir manqué, par inadvertence, ayant d'abord cru que ce secret exigé n'étoit que la délicatesse d'un cœur noble, qui ne veut point publier ses bienfaits. Il faut, de plus, vous dire, qu'avant l'arrivée de votre pénultième lettre j'en avois reçu une de Madame la M. de L—, dans laquelle, après m'avoir parlé de vos propositions pour l'Angleterre, elle ajoute que vous m'en avez fait d'autres qu'elle aimeroit bien mieux que j'acceptasse. Or, n'ayant point encore reçu la lettre, où vous me parlez de l'offre de M. le P. de C—, pouvois-je croire autre chose si non que l'offre de Madame De la M— étoit connue et approuvée de Madame de L—? J'étois dans cette idée quand je lui répondis. Cependant, je suis persuadé que je ne lui en parlai point; mais je ne me souviens pas assez de ma lettre, pour en être sûr.

Voici la lettre que vous m'ordonnez de vous renvoyer. Milord Maréchal, qui m'honore de ses bontés, pense comme vous sur le voyage d'Angleterre, que vous me proposez. Je ne sais

même s'il n'a pas aussi écrit à M. Hume sur mon compte. Je me rends donc; et si après le voyage que vous vous proposez de faire dans cette île le printems prochain, vous persistez à croire qu'il me convienne d'y aller, j'irai sous vos auspices y chercher la paix, que je ne puis trouver nulle part. Il n'y a que mon état qui puisse nuire à ce projet. Les hivers ici sont si rudes, et les approches de celui-ci me sont déjà si contraires, que c'est une espèce de folie d'étendre mes vues au-delà. Nous parlerons de tout cela dans le tems; mais, en attendant, je ne puis vous cacher que je suis très-déterminé à ne point passer par la France. Il faut qu'un étranger soit fou, pour mettre le pied dans un pays, où l'on ne connoît d'autre justice que la force, et où l'on ne sait pas même ce que c'est que le droit des gens.

Vous aurez lu, Madame, que le Roi de Prusse a fait sur mon compte une réponse très-obligeante à Milord Maréchal. On a fait courir dans le public un extrait de cette lettre, qui m'est honorable aussi, mais qui n'est pas vrai: car Milord M— ne l'a montrée à personne, pas même à moi. Il m'a dit seulement que le Roi se feroit un plaisir de me faire bâtir un hermitage à ma fantaisie, et que j'en pourrois choisir moi-même l'emplacement. Je vous avoue, qu'une offre, si bien assortie à mon goût, m'a changé le cœur. Je ne sais point résister aux caresses, et je suis bien heureux que jamais ministre ne m'ait voulu tenter par là. J'ai répondu à Milord, que j'étois touché des bontés du Roi, mais qu'il me seroit impossible de dormir dans une maison bâtie pour moi d'une main royale, et il n'en a plus été question. Madame,

j'ai trop mal pensé et parlé du Roi de Prusse, pour recevoir jamais ses bienfaits ; mais je l'aimerai toute ma vie.

Il faut que je vous supplie, Madame, de vouloir bien vous faire informer de M. Duclos. Je crains qu'il ne soit malade. Il m'a écrit avec intérêt, je lui ai répondu. Il m'a récrit, en me demandant qui étoient mes ennemis, et quels, et d'autres détails sur ma situation. Je l'ai satisfait pleinement dans une seconde réponse, dans laquelle je lui ai développé toutes les menées du Poëte, du Jongleur, et de leurs amis. Dans la même lettre je lui demande, à mon tour, des nouvelles de ce qui se passe à Paris par rapport à moi, selon l'offre qu'il m'en avoit faite lui-même. Il y a de cela plus de six semaines, et je n'entends plus parler de lui. M. Duclos n'est certainement ni un faux ami, ni un négligent: il faut absolument qu'il soit malade. Je vous supplie de vouloir bien me tirer de peine sur son compte. Je n'ai point encore écrit au Chevalier de Lorenzi, et j'ai grand tort; car je n'ai pas cessé un moment de compter sur toute son amitié, quoique je le sache très-lié avec des gens qui ne m'aiment pas, mais qui feignent de m'aimer avec ceux qui m'aiment, et qui ne manqueront pas d'avoir cette feinte avec lui.

Puisque vous daignez vous ressouvenir de Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, permettez, Madame, qu'elle vous témoigne sa reconnoissance, et qu'elle vous assure de son profond respect. Le froid augmente ici de jour en jour, et le pays est tout couvert de neige.

Si vous aviez la bonté, Madame, de m'écrire directement, vos lettres me parviendroient beaucoup plus tôt ; car il faut qu'elles passent ici, pour aller à Neufchâtel.

(TRANSLATION.)

Motiers, 7th October, 1762.

I HOPE, Madam, that as far as concerns the obliging offers of Madame De la M——, I have kept the secret which you recommend to me in your letter of the 10th September. However, as I have not an exact recollection of what I may have written, I may perhaps have failed in this respect, through inadvertency; having originally imagined that the said exacted secret emanated solely from the delicacy of a noble soul, which was unwilling to make public its own charitable actions. And I must further observe to you that, previous to the arrival of your last letter but one, I received one from Madame la M. de L—, in which, after speaking to me of your proposals with respect to England, she adds, that you had made me other offers, which she should prefer to see me accept. Thus circumstanced, having not yet received the letter, in which you speak of the offer of M. le P. de C—, could I believe any other than that the proposal of Madame De la M— was known to, and approved of by Madame de L—? I was under the influence of this idea, when I replied to her. However, I am convinced that

I have not spoken to her on the subject; but I have not sufficient recollection of my letter, to be sure of it.

Inclosed is the letter, which you desire me to return to you. My Lord Marshal, who honours me with his kindness, is of the same opinion as you, with respect to the journey to England which you propose. I am not certain even, whether he has not written to Mr. Hume respecting me. I yield therefore; and if, after the journey which you propose to make in this island, in the ensuing spring, you should still continue to believe that it is expedient for me to go there, I shall go, under your auspices, in quest of that peace, which I can find no where. There is nothing but the bad state of my health, which can militate against this project. The winters are so severe here, and the fore-runners of the approaching one have already proved so injurious to me, that it is a species of madness to extend my prospects beyond it. We will speak of all this in due season; but, in the mean time, I cannot disguise from you, that I am very determined not to pass through France. A foreigner must be a fool to set foot in a country, where one recognizes no other justice than force, and where one does not even know what is meant by the Law of Nations.

You will have read, Madam, that the King of Prussia has returned a very obliging answer, respecting me, to My Lord Marshal. An extract from this letter has been circulated in public, which is honourable for me, but which is not true; for My Lord M. has not shewn it to a single person, not even to myself.

He has only told me that the King would experience pleasure in causing a hermitage to be built for me, after my own fancy, and that I might myself make choice of the spot for its erection. I confess that an offer, so conformable to my taste, has changed my heart. I cannot resist caresses, and I am very happy that no minister has ever made the experiment of tempting me in that manner. I made answer to My Lord, that I was deeply moved with the kind intentions of the King, but that it would be impossible for me to sleep in a house built for me by a royal hand; and since that, the question has been no longer agitated. Madam, I have thought and have spoken too ill of the King of Prussia, ever to accept of his benefits; but I shall love him as long as I live.

I must entreat of you, Madam, to have the goodness to make inquiries relative to M. Duclos. I am afraid that he is indisposed. He wrote to me in a very affectionate manner. I answered him. He wrote to me a second time, desiring to be informed who and what were my enemies, with other particulars connected with my situation. I gave him full satisfaction on these points in a second answer, in which I laid open all the intrigues of the Poet, of the Juggler, and of their friends. In the same letter I requested him, in my turn, to inform me of what was passing at Paris, bearing relation to myself, conformably to the offer which he had himself made me to that effect. This correspondence took place upwards of six weeks ago, and I have not heard of him since. M. Duclos is certainly neither a false friend,

nor a neglectful one—he must absolutely be ill. I intreat you to put me out of suspense on his account. I have not yet written to the Chevalier de Lorenzi, and I am much to blame; for I have never ceased one instant to rely with confidence upon his unabated friendship, although I know that he is closely connected with persons, who do not love me, but who feign to love me when they are with those who do love me, and who will not fail to play off this feint upon him.

Since you deign to bear in mind Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, permit her, Madam, to testify her gratitude, and to assure you of her profound respect. The cold grows daily more intense here, and the country is entirely covered with snow.

If you would have the goodness, Madam, to write to me direct, your letters would reach me much sooner; for they are obliged to pass through this place, to go to Neufchatel.

LE MARECHAL D'ECOSSE, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Neufchâtel, ce 28 Novembre, 1762.

JEAN JAQUES est certainement trop obstiné dans les petites choses et assez indifférentes; mais il l'est aussi dans le bon, dans la probité, dans le désintéressement, ce qui fait bien plus que contrebalancer ces petites opiniâtretés, et le

fait aimer et respecter. Il est bien plus sauvage qu'un sauvage de l'Amérique. Si un d'eux avoit pris plus de poisson qu'il ne pourroit emporter, et s'il en rencontroit un autre, sans poisson, il lui diroit : Tiens, voilà du poisson que je laisse ; prends-le. Le second sauvage le feroit. Jean Jaques et moi nous sommes les deux sauvages, (et nous ne le sommes pas mal) mais Jean Jaques ne veut pas emporter mon poisson. Il aime mieux le laisser pourrir par terre. A Colombier, il seroit mieux logé, dans un air plus doux, il seroit seul, (je n'y suis que l'été) il auroit le fruit et les légumes, dont grande partie se pourrissent. Il ne viendra pas ; mais comme je trouve juste que chacun vit à sa mode, pourvu qu'il ne fasse rien contre les bonnes mœurs, je ne parle plus à notre ami de quitter sa montagne. Le Roi me dit, en parlant de lui ; " *Ce grand désintéressement est, sans contredit, le fond essentiel de la vertu.*" Il le pousse, selon moi, trop loin. Quand j'étois en Angleterre, bien des gens pensoient que le Roi d'Angleterre, m'ayant donné ma grace, devoit me donner de quoi vivre. Madame Auguste, sœur du Roi, me fit dire de demander une pension, et que, si je ne voulois pas faire moi-même cette démarche, je la fisse demander pour moi par quelque autre, ajoutant, qu'elle étoit assurée que je l'aurois. J'ai répondu, que je n'avois nulles prétensions par des services rendus à la famille régnante ; que, si le Roi avoit une pension à donner, il devroit la donner à quelqu'un qui la méritoit mieux, et qui en avoit plus de besoin. Que, si j'étois dans le besoin, ou si je le devenois, j'aurois certainement recours à sa bonté.

Si Jean Jaques vouloit seulement consentir à recevoir les petits bienfaits du Roi, quand ses ressources seront finies, je serois content, et je le trouverois raisonnable. Je crois, Madame, que vous jugerez que, si je fis bien de refuser la pension, je le fis aussi en disant que je l'accepterois, si j'en avois besoin : et dans ce cas je l'aurois demandé. Je crois deviner le secret de notre ami. Il espère mourir, avant que tout son argent soit mangé. Il pourroit se tromper.

Votre bonté, et l'intérêt que vous prenez à cet homme de bien, feront l'excuse de ma longue lettre, que je finis en vous assurant avec vérité du respect, avec lequel j'ai l'honneur d'être,

Madame,

Votre très-humble et très-obéissant Serviteur,

(Signé) LE MARECHAL D'ECOSSE.

P. S. Je viens de recevoir une lettre de M. Rousseau, remplie de plaintes de sa santé, de sa situation, et de craintes que vous, Madame, ne trouviez mauvais qu'il persiste à ne vouloir pas accepter les bienfaits du Roi. Je crois qu'il faut le laisser, sans le gêner, en se réservant à faire ce que nous pourrons, dans la suite, s'il devient plus traitable. Ses persécutions, sa santé, et peut-être aussi son caractère singulier, peuvent bien lui donner un peu d'humeur; j'y compâtis.

Je lui avois fait un projet; mais en le disant un château en Espagne, d'aller habiter une maison toute meublée que j'ai en Ecosse; d'engager le bon David Hume de vivre avec nous. Il

devoit y avoir une salle de compagnie ; car personne n'entreroit dans la chambre d'un autre ; chacun feroit ses réglemens pour soi, tant pour le spirituel que pour le temporel : c'étoient toutes les loix de notre république, excepté que, pour les dépenses de l'état, chacun devroit contribuer selon ses biens. Notre ami a fort goûté mon projet : il auroit envie de l'exécuter, et moi de même, si je n'étois pas si vieux, et si ma terre n'étoit pas substituée. Une des raisons qui persuaderoient le plus à Jean Jaques à vouloir réaliser mon projet, est *qu'il ignore la langue du pays :* c'est bien de lui que cette raison, et peut-être est-elle bonne.

(TRANSLATION.)

Neufchatel, 28th November, 1762.

JEAN JAQUES is certainly too obstinate in trifling and indifferent matters, but he is the same in what is good, in probity, in disinterestedness ; and this more than counterbalances these little obstinacies, and causes him to be beloved and respected. He is much more savage than any savage of America. If one of the latter had caught more fish than he could carry away, and should happen to meet another, who had no fish, he would say to him : ' Hold ! here are some fish, which I leave ; take them.' The other would do it. Jean Jaques and myself we are the two savages, (and we do not act our part amiss) ; but Jean Jaques will

not carry away my fish. He would sooner leave it to rot on the ground. At Colombier, he would be better lodged, in a milder climate, he would be alone (I only reside there during the summer), he would have abundant supply of fruit and vegetables, great part of which is left to rot. He will not go there; but as I think it no more than right, that every man should follow his own inclinations, provided he is guilty of no breach of good manners, I no longer talk to our friend about quitting his mountain. The King said to me, speaking of him: "*This great disinterestedness is, unquestionably, the essential foundation of virtue.*" This he carries, in my opinion, to too great an extent. When I was in England, many persons thought that the King of England, having granted me a free pardon, ought likewise to give me the means of support. The Princess Augusta, sister to the King, sent me instructions to solicit a pension, with the observation, that if I did not like to make this application myself, I should employ another person to solicit it for me, adding withall, that she was well assured that I should obtain it. I made answer, that I had no pretensions thereto, by any services rendered by me to the family on the throne: that if the King had a pension to bestow, he ought to give it to some one who better merited it, and who stood in greater need of it. Finally, that if I were in want, or should become so, I certainly would have recourse to his goodness.

If Jean Jaques would only consent to accept some small benefit of the King, when his resources shall be exhausted, I should be satisfied, and I should deem his conduct rational. I believe,

Madam, that you will be of opinion that, if I did well in refusing the pension, I did the same in declaring that I would accept of it, should I stand in need thereof; and that, in the latter case, I would have solicited for it. I think I have discovered the secret of our friend: he hopes to die, before all his money shall be expended. He may be disappointed.

Your goodness, and the interest which you take in this virtuous man, will serve as my apology for this long letter, which I conclude by assuring you, with sincerity, of the respect with which I have the honour to be,

Madam,

Your very humble and very obedient Servant,

(Signed) THE MARECHAL D'ECOSSE.

P. S. I have just received a letter from M. Rousseau, filled with complaints of his ill state of health, and his fears lest you, Madam, should take it amiss that he persists in not consenting to accept of the benefits of the King. My opinion is, that we ought to leave him to himself, without imposing any restraint upon him; at the same time reserving to ourselves the right to do what we can, in the sequel, should he become more tractable. The persecutions he has undergone, his ill state of health, and possibly the singularity of his character, may well put him a little out of temper. I feel for him.

I have made a proposition to him, but telling him at the same time that it was a mere castle in the air, to take up his

residence in a well-furnished house, which I have in Scotland, to persuade our good friend, Mr. Hume, to live with us. One of the rooms is to be our common drawing-room, for no one is to enter into the apartment of the other; every one is to adopt his own rules and regulations, as well in spiritual as in temporal concerns. These were the only laws of our republic, with this exception, that with respect to the expences of the state, every one must contribute, according to his means. Our friend is enraptured with this project: he would be eager to carry it into execution, and so would I be too, if I were not so far advanced in years, and if my estate were not entailed. One of the principal reasons, which would induce Jean Jaques to realize this project is, that *he is not conversant in the language of the country.* This, on his part, is a reason perfectly in character; and perhaps, after all, it is a good one.

ROUSSEAU, A MILORD MARECHAL.

Novembre, 1762.

Non, Milord, je ne suis ni en santé, ni content; mais quand je reçois de vous quelque marque de bonté et de souvenir, je m'attendris, j'oublie mes peines; au surplus j'ai le cœur abattu, et je tire bien moins de courage de ma philosophie que de votre vin d'Espagne.

Madame la Comtesse de Boufflers demeure Rue Notre Dame de Nazareth, proche le Temple; mais je ne comprends pas comment vous n'avez pas son adresse, puisqu'elle me marque que vous lui avez encore écrit pour l'engager à me faire accepter les offres du Roi. De grace, Milord, ne vous servez plus de médiateur avec moi, et daignez être bien persuadé, je vous supplie, que ce que vous n'obtiendrez pas directement, ne sera obtenu par nul autre. Madame de Boufflers semble oublier dans cette occasion le respect qu'on doit aux malheureux. Je lui réponds plus durement que je ne devois peut-être, et je crains que cette affaire ne me brouille avec elle, si même cela n'est déjà fait.

Je ne sais, Milord, si vous songez encore à notre château en Espagne; mais je sens que cette idée, si elle ne s'exécute pas, fera le malheur de ma vie. Tout me déplaît, tout me gêne, tout m'importune; je n'ai plus de confiance et de liberté qu'avec vous, et séparé par d'insurmontables obstacles du peu d'amis qui me restent, je ne puis vivre en paix que loin de toute autre société. C'est, j'espère, un avantage que j'aurai dans votre terre, n'étant connu là bas de personne, et ne sachant pas la langue du pays. Mais je crains que le désir d'y venir vous-même n'ait été plutôt une fantaisie qu'un vrai projet. Et je suis mortifié aussi que vous n'ayez aucune réponse de M. Hume. Quoi qu'il en soit, si je ne puis vivre avec vous, je veux vivre seul. Mais il y a bien loin d'ici en Ecosse, et je suis bien peu en état d'entreprendre un si long trajet. Pour Colombier, il n'y faut pas penser; j'aimerois

autant habiter une ville. C'est assez d'y faire de tems en tems des voyages, lorsque je saurai ne vous pas importuner.

J'attends pourtant avec impatience le retour de la belle saison pour vous y aller voir, et décider avec vous quel parti je dois prendre, si j'ai encore long-tems à traîner mes chagrins et mes maux ; car cela commence à devenir long, et n'ayant rien prévu de ce qui m'arrive, j'ai peine à savoir comment je dois m'en tirer. J'ai demandé à M. de Malesherbes la copie de quatre lettres que je lui écrivis l'hiver dernier, croyant avoir peu de tems encore à vivre, et n'imaginant pas que j'aurois tant à souffrir. Ces lettres contiennent la peinture exacte de mon caractère et la clef de toute ma conduite autant que j'ai pu lire dans mon propre cœur. L'intérêt que vous daignez prendre à moi me fait croire que vous ne serez pas fâché de les lire, et je les prendrai en allant à Colombier.

On m'écrit de Pétersbourg que l'Impératrice fait proposer à M. D'Alembert d'aller élever son fils. J'ai répondu là-dessus que M. D'Alembert avoit de la philosophie, du savoir, et beaucoup d'esprit ; mais que s'il élevoit ce petit garçon, il n'en feroit ni un conquérant ni un sage, qu'il en feroit un arlequin.

Je vous demande pardon, Milord, de mon ton familier ; je n'en saurois prendre un autre, quand mon cœur s'épanche ; et quand un homme a de l'étoffe en lui-même, je ne regarde plus à ses habits. Je n'adopte nulle formule, n'y voyant aucun terme fixe pour s'arrêter sans être faux ; j'en pourrois cependant adopter

une auprès de vous, Milord, sans courir ce risque; ce seroit celle du bon Ibrahim.[1]

(TRANSLATION.)

November, 1762.

No, my Lord, I am neither in good health nor happy; but any mark of kindness and remembrance from you touches my heart, and makes me forget my pains. Besides, my spirits are low, and I derive far less courage from my philosophy than from your Spanish wine.

The Countess De Boufflers resides *Rue Notre Dame de Nazareth*, near the Temple; but I cannot comprehend how it happens that you have not her direction, as she informs me that you have again requested her to induce me to accept the offers of the King. For goodness' sake, my Lord, do not employ any mediator with me; and be assured, I intreat you, that whatever you cannot obtain from me directly, will not be obtained by any one else. Madame De Boufflers appears to forget on this occasion, the respect which is due to the unfortunate. I have perhaps been more severe in my answer than I ought; and I am

[1] Ibrahim, esclave Turc de Milord Maréchal, finissoit les lettres qu'il lui adressoit, par cette formule: "Je suis plus votre ami que jamais."

afraid this business will make me fall out with her, if I have not done so already.

I don't know, my Lord, whether you are still thinking of our castle in the air; but if the idea be not realized, I feel that it will embitter my life. Nothing pleases me; every thing is a trouble and vexation to me. I can confide in no one but you; I enjoy no liberty but with you; and being separated by insurmountable obstacles from the few friends I have left, it is only far from any other society that I can live in peace. This is an advantage which I hope to enjoy on your estate, as I am not known to any one there, and unacquainted with the language of the country. But I am afraid the desire to proceed thither yourself, was rather a whim than a real project; and I am also vexed at your having no answer from Mr. Hume. However, if I cannot live with you, I will live alone. But Scotland is very far off, and I am little able to undertake so long a journey. As for Colombier, you must not think of it; I would as lief reside in a city. I am contented with a few visits thither now and then, whenever I am sure not to be troublesome.

It is, however, with great impatience I await the return of fine weather to see you at Colombier, and to determine with you what I am to do, if doomed to drag on my sorrows and pains much longer, for they begin to tire my patience; and having foreseen nothing of what happens to me, I scarcely know how to extricate myself. I have asked M. de Malesherbes for the copy

of four letters which I wrote to him last winter, when I thought I had but a short time to live, and was far from supposing that I should have so much to suffer. These letters contain an exact account of my disposition, and give the key to my conduct as far as I am able to read my own heart. The concern which you deign to feel for me, induces me to fancy you will not be sorry to read them. I shall bring them with me on my first visit to Colombier.

A letter from Petersburgh informs me, that the Empress intends to entrust M. D'Alembert with the education of her son. I have stated in my answer, that M. D'Alembert has much philosophy and learning, and a great deal of wit; but that if he educated that young Prince, he would make neither a conqueror nor a wise man of him, but a harlequin.

I intreat your pardon, my Lord, for the familiarity of my language; I cannot use any other when I unbosom myself; and whenever a man has merit in himself, I don't look at his clothes. I adopt no complimentary form of subscription, because I cannot discover the limits which veracity is not to exceed; I could however adopt one with you, my Lord, without running that risk—I mean that of good Ibrahim.[1]

[1] *Ibrahim*, a Turkish slave of Lord Marechal, used to conclude his letters to his Lordship with—"I am more than ever your friend."

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Edinburgh, 22nd January, 1763.

MADAM,

I WAS so rash as to regard the letter, with which your Ladyship has honoured me, as a kind of challenge; and I sat down several times with an intention of giving you an answer in French, being ashamed, when I saw your Ladyship mistress of so much elegance in our tongue, not to be able to express myself with some tolerable propriety in yours. But though the French language be esteemed much more easy to foreigners, and though I had conversed in it some years of my life, I found it more prudent to desist from my enterprize, and not allow your Ladyship's superiority, who possessed not these advantages, to appear too conspicuous above me. I decline, therefore, the field of combat; and I hope your Ladyship will be contented with the victory, and not force me also to confess your superiority in English, a confession which I would make with great reluctance, and which yet I have a great difficulty to withhold, when I peruse your letters. I dare venture to affirm, Madam, that you are the sole instance of a foreigner, not habituated to our tongue, who has, from reading alone, become so entirely mistress of it. I had a letter lately from my friend,

Lord Marechal, Governor of Neufchatel, by which I learned that M. Rousseau had taken shelter with him from the persecution of his enemies. My Lord praises extremely the politeness and agreeableness of M. Rousseau's conversation, and seems very desirous to detain the *honest savage*, as he pleasantly calls him, in his government: but I suspect, that the King of Prussia's authority is so limited in that republic, as scarcely to afford the philosopher sufficient protection from the bigots, who still continue to harass him. Meanwhile that great Prince ordered My Lord to build him a hermitage, to lay out a small garden for him, and to supply him with all his necessaries. But Rousseau, with his usual dignity, refused all these gratuities, though at the same time he desired My Lord to learn from me, whether it were possible for him to gain from the London booksellers as much money as would suffice for his maintenance; and this recompence, being the fruit of his own industry, he would have no scruple to accept of. I think this instance of conduct a kind of phenomenon in the republic of letters, and one very honourable for M. Rousseau.. One is only apt to wish that he could practise this virtue with less hardship and difficulty; though we must also confess, that the difficulty adds to the lustre of it. I have heard, that the circumstance which deterred him from coming over to England, as he first intended, was a harsh reflection, which he threw out on the people in his Treatise of Education: if this was his motive, I am persuaded that he would find it a vain fear, and that every one would rather have

been anxious to shew respect to his merit. Perhaps also he might have seen reason to retract the opinion which he had formed of the nation; and might have observed the English to be more hard in their exterior than their interior. He would have seen many instances of humanity very honourable to their character: besides, the magnificent charities, which are supported by voluntary contributions, where superstition has little share, they practised, during the late war, a piece of humanity which was very commendable. We had sometimes near 30,000 French seamen prisoners, who were distributed into different prisons, and whom the Parliament maintained by a considerable sum allotted them. They received food from the public, but it was thought that their own friends would supply them with clothes, which however was found, after some time, to be neglected. The cry arose, that the brave and gallant men, though enemies, were perishing with cold in prison: a subscription was set on foot; great sums were given by all ranks of people; and, notwithstanding the national foolish prejudices against the French, a remarkable zeal every where appeared for this charity. I am afraid that M. Rousseau could not have produced many parallel instances among his heroes, the Greeks; and still fewer among the Romans.

You deign, Madam, to ask my opinion of the new performance of M. Rousseau. I know that it becomes me better to form my judgment upon yours; but in compliance with your

commands, I shall not make a secret of my sentiments. All the writings of that author appear to me admirable, particularly on the head of eloquence; and if I be not much mistaken, he gives to the French tongue an energy, which it scarce seems to have reached in any other hands. But as his enemies have objected, that with this domineering force of genius there is always intermingled some degree of extravagance, it is impossible for his friends altogether to deny the charge; and were it not for his frequent and earnest protestations to the contrary, one would be apt to suspect, that he chooses his topics less from persuasion, than from the pleasure of shewing his invention, and surprizing the reader by his paradoxes. The Treatise of Education, as it possesses much of the merit, seems also exposed to the faults of his other performances; and as he indulges his love of the marvellous even in so serious and important a subject, he has given a pledge to the public that he was in earnest in all his other topics. If I dared to object any thing to M. Rousseau's eloquence, which is the shining side of his character, I should say, that it was not wholly free from the defect sometimes found in that of the Roman orator; and that their great talent for expression was apt to produce a prolixity in both. This last performance chiefly is exposed to this objection; and I own, that though it abounds in noble and shining passages, it gave me rather less pleasure than his former writings. However, it carries still the stamp of a great genius; and, what enhances its beauty,

the stamp of a very particular genius. The noble pride and spleen and indignation of the author bursts out with freedom in a hundred places, and serves fully to characterize the lofty spirit of the man.

When I came to peruse that passage of Mons. Rousseau's Treatise which has occasioned all the persecution against him, I was not in the least surprized that it gave offence. He has not had the precaution to throw any veil over his sentiments; and as he scorns to dissemble his contempt of established opinions, he could not wonder that all the zealots were in arms against him. The liberty of the press is not so secured in any country, scarce even in this, as not to render such an open attack of popular prejudices somewhat dangerous.

I own the truth of what your Ladyship remarks, that I need in no wise dread the precedent, could my affairs permit me to pay a visit to France, now that peace is happily established; and nothing could be a stronger inducement to me than the invitation with which your Ladyship has been pleased to honour me. My friend, Mr. Stuart, who enjoyed the happiness of your conversation at Paris, and who informed me more fully of your partiality towards me, has extremely increased my desire of paying a visit to a city, the center of the polite arts, and to a lady who is there the center of politeness. I shall never lose sight of so agreeable a prospect; but as I cannot and would not propose, that such a visit would be for a short season,

it will require some more arrangements than I can take of a sudden.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest regard,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's obedient, and

most humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

ROUSSEAU, A DAVID HUME.

A Motiers Travers, le 19 Février, 1763.

JE n'ai reçu qu'ici, Monsieur, et depuis peu, la lettre dont vous m'honoriez à Londres le 2 Juillet dernier, supposant que j'étois dans cette Capitale. C'étoit sans doute dans votre nation, et le plus près de vous qu'il m'eût été possible, que j'aurois cherché ma retraite, si j'avois prévu l'accueil qui m'attendoit dans ma patrie. Il n'y avoit qu'elle que je pusse préférer à l'Angleterre; et cette prévention, dont j'ai été trop puni, m'étoit alors bien pardonnable; mais à mon grand étonnement, et même à celui du public, je n'ai trouvé que des affronts et des outrages où j'espérois, sinon de la reconnoissance, au moins des consolations. Que de choses m'ont fait regretter l'asile et l'hospitalité philosophique qui m'attendoient près de vous! Toutefois mes malheurs m'en ont toujours rapproché en quelque manière. La protection et les bontés de Milord Maréchal, votre illustre et

digne compatriote, m'ont fait trouver, pour ainsi dire, l'Ecosse au milieu de la Suisse; il vous a rendu présent à nos entretiens; il m'a fait faire avec vos vertus la connoissance que je n'avois faite encore qu'avec vos talens; il m'a inspiré la plus tendre amitié pour vous, et le plus ardent désir d'obtenir la vôtre, avant que je susse que vous étiez disposé à me l'accorder. Jugez, quand je trouve ce penchant réciproque, combien j'aurois de plaisir à m'y livrer! Non, Monsieur, je ne vous rendois que la moitié de ce qui vous étoit dû quand je n'avois pour vous que de l'admiration. Vos grandes vues, votre étonnante impartialité, votre génie vous éléveroient trop au-dessus des hommes, si votre bon cœur ne vous en rapprochoit. Milord Maréchal, en m'apprenant à vous voir encore plus aimable que sublime, me rend tous les jours votre commerce plus désirable, et nourrit en moi l'empressement qu'il m'a fait naître de finir mes jours près de vous, Monsieur. Qu'une meilleure santé, qu'une situation plus commode ne me met-elle à portée de faire ce voyage, comme je le désirerois! Que ne puis-je espérer de nous voir un jour rassemblés avec Milord dans votre commune patrie, qui deviendroit la mienne! Je bénirois dans une société si douce les malheurs par lesquels j'y fus conduit, et je croirois n'avoir commencé de vivre que du jour qu'elle auroit commencé. Puissé-je voir cet heureux jour plus désiré qu'espéré! Avec quel transport je m'écrierois en touchant l'heureuse terre où sont nés *David Hume* et le *Maréchal d'Ecosse*.

——— Salve fatis mihi debita tellus!
Hic domus, hæc patria est.

(TRANSLATION.)

Motiers Travers, February the 19th, 1763.

It is only very lately, and in this place, that I received the letter with which you honoured me in London on the second of July last, under the supposition that I was in that capital. Undoubtedly it is in the midst of your nation, and as near you as possible, that I should have sought for a retreat, could I have foreseen the reception which awaited me in my own country, the only one which I could prefer to England; and this predilection, for which I have been too severely punished, was certainly very pardonable at that time: but to my great surprise, and even to the surprise of the public, I have met with nothing but insults and outrages where I hoped, if not for gratitude, at least for consolations. How many circumstances have made me regret the asylum and philosophical hospitality that awaited me with you! My misfortunes have, however, brought me nearer to it in some degree. The patronage and kindness of Lord Marechal, your illustrious and worthy countryman, make me, as it were, find Scotland in the midst of Switzerland. He renders you present to our conversations: to the knowledge which I had of your talents, he has added that of your virtues. He inspired me with the tenderest friendship for you, and the most ardent desire

to obtain yours, before I knew you were disposed to grant it. Judge what pleasure I feel by indulging this inclination when I find it returned! Indeed, Sir, I rendered you only half of your due when I entertained for you nothing but admiration. Your enlarged views, your astonishing impartiality, your genius, would raise you too high above other men, did not your good heart bring you nearer them. By representing you still more amiable than sublime, Lord Marechal inflames every day the desire I feel for your conversation, and encourages the anxious wish of my heart, which he has excited, of ending my days near you. Would to Heaven that better health and more comfortable circumstances enabled me to undertake this journey as I could wish! Why can I not indulge the hope of seeing us one day united with My Lord in your common country, which thus would become mine! In such an agreeable society I should bless the misfortunes which introduced me to it, and fancy I had only begun to live the day when it commenced. May I behold that happy day, which is more anxiously desired than hoped for! With what extasy I should exclaim, on landing in the fortunate country which gave birth to David Hume and the Marechal d'Ecosse,

——————— Salve fatis mihi debita tellus!
Hic domus, hæc patria est.

ROUSSEAU, A M. MEURON.

A Motiers, le 23 Mars, 1763.

Je ne sais, Monsieur, si je ne dois pas bénir mes misères, tant elles sont accompagnées de consolations. Votre lettre m'en a donné de bien douces, et j'en ai trouvé de plus douces encore dans le paquet qu'elle contenoit. J'avois exposé à Milord Maréchal les raisons, qui me faisoient désirer de quitter Paris pour chercher la tranquillité, et pour l'y laisser. Il a approuvé ces raisons, et il est comme moi d'avis que j'en sorte. Ainsi, Monsieur, c'est un parti pris, avec regret, je vous le jure, mais irrévocablement. Assurément tous ceux, qui ont des bontés pour moi, ne peuvent désapprouver que, dans le triste état où je suis, j'aille chercher une terre de paix, pour y déposer mes os. Avec plus de vigueur et de santé, je consentirois à faire face à mes persécuteurs, pour le bien public. Mais accablé d'infirmités et de malheurs sans exemple, je suis peu propre à jouer un rôle. Il y auroit de la cruauté à me l'imposer; qu'on me laisse aller mourir en paix ailleurs; car ici cela n'est pas possible, moins par la mauvaise humeur des habitans que par le trop grand voisinage de Genève; inconvénient, qu' avec la meilleure volonté du monde, il ne dépend pas d'eux de lever.

Ce parti, Monsieur, étant celui auquel on vouloit me réduire, doit naturellement faire tomber toute démarche ultérieure, pour m'y forcer. Je ne suis point encore en état de me transporter, et il me faut quelque tems pour mettre ordre à mes affaires, durant lequel je puis raisonnablement espérer, qu'on ne me traitera pas plus mal qu'un Turc, un Juif, un Payen, un Athée, et qu'on voudra bien me laisser jouir, pour quelques semaines, de l'hospitalité qu'on ne refuse à aucun étranger. Ce n'est pas, Monsieur, que je veuille désormais me regarder comme tel; au contraire l'honneur d'être inscrit parmi les citoyens du pays me sera toujours précieux par lui-même, encore plus par la main dont il me vient, et je mettrai toujours au rang de mes premiers devoirs le zèle et la fidélité que je dois au Roi, comme notre Prince, et comme notre Protecteur. J'ajoute que j'y laisse un bien très-regrettable, mais dont je n'entends point du tout me désaisir—ce sont les amis que j'y ai trouvés dans mes disgraces, et que j'espère y conserver, malgré mon éloignement.

Quant à Messieurs les Ministres, s'ils trouvent à propos d'aller toujours en avant, avec leur Consistoire, je me traînerai de mon mieux pour y comparoître, en quel état que je sois, puisqu'ils le veulent ainsi; et je crois qu'ils trouveront, pour ce que j'ai à leur dire, qu'ils auroient pu se passer de tant d'appareil. Du reste, ils sont fort les maîtres de m'excommunier, si cela les amuse. Etre excommunié, de la façon de Monsieur Voltaire, m'amusera fort aussi.

Permettez, Monsieur, que cette lettre soit commune aux

deux Messieurs, qui ont eu la bonté de m'écrire avec un intérêt si généreux. Vous sentez que dans l'embarras où je me trouve, je n'ai pas plus le temps que les termes pour exprimer combien je suis touché de vos soins et des leurs. Mille salutations et respects.

(TRANSLATION.)

Motiers, 23d March, 1763.

I DO not know, Sir, whether I ought not to bless my misfortunes, so richly productive are they of consolation. Truly sweet are those, which your letter has procured me; and I have met with sweeter still in the parcel which it contained. I have stated to My Lord Marechal the reasons which caused me to quit Paris, in quest of tranquillity, and to leave him there. He has approved of these reasons, and coincides with me in opinion, that it is expedient for me to depart. Thus, Sir, this is a measure decided upon; with regret, I assure you, but irrevocably. Most assuredly all those, who feel well inclined towards me, will not disapprove that, in the sorrowful predicament in which I stand, I should go in search of a land of peace, where I may deposit my bones. Were I possessed of greater vigour and health, I would consent to look my persecutors in

the face, for the public good. But overwhelmed with infirmities and misfortunes without parallel, I am little qualified to act a prominent part. It would be cruelty to impose this task upon me; let me be suffered to die in peace elsewhere, for here it is impossible, less so on account of the evil disposition of the inhabitants, than its too near vicinity to Geneva—an inconvenience this, that with the best will in the world, it is not in their competency to remove.

This step, Sir, being precisely the very one to which my enemies have been labouring to reduce me, must naturally cause to fall to the ground all further measures to compel me to it. I am not as yet in a condition to be removed, and I need some time to put my affairs in order, during which I may reasonably hope, that I shall not meet with worse treatment than a Turk, a Jew, a Heathen, or an Atheist, and that my enemies will have the charity to permit me to enjoy, for some weeks, the hospitality which is not denied to any stranger. Not, Sir, that it is the least in my intentions to consider myself as such; on the contrary, the honour of having my name registered among the citizens of this country, will always remain dear to me, with reference to itself, but still more so, with reference to the hand to which I stand indebted for it, and I shall always rank among my first duties the zeal and the fidelity which I owe to the King, as our Prince and our Protector. And let me add, that I shall leave behind me a treasure, well worthy of regret, but of which

I by no means consent to divest myself,—I allude to the friends I there found in my disgrace, and whom I hope to preserve, notwithstanding the distance that separates us.

With respect to the gentlemen of the clergy, if they judge it expedient to push matters to extremity, with their Consistory, I will hobble along as well as I possibly can, to appear before them, let my state of health be what it will, since they will have it so, and I am of opinion they will find, as far as regards what I have got to say to them, that they might well have dispensed with so much publicity and parade. For the rest, they hold the power in their own hands to excommunicate me, if this yields them any amusement. To be excommunicated, after the manner of M. Voltaire, would yield me great amusement likewise.

Permit, Sir, that this letter may be in common for the two gentlemen, who have had the goodness to write to me with so generous an interest. You will conceive that, in my present embarrassment, I am not less at a loss for time than for terms, to express adequately how deeply I am affected by your attentions and by theirs. A thousand greetings and respects.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Edinburgh, 3d July, 1763.

MADAM,

BEING engaged in a party to a remote corner of the country, I was informed very late of the visit, with which your Ladyship has been pleased to favour this island; and after Lord Elibank was so good as to give me intelligence of it, I delayed for some time paying my respects to your Ladyship by letter, in hopes that I might possibly be able to do it in person, and thereby to gratify that desire by which I have long been possessed, of making myself known to a Lady so universally valued, and who has done me so much honour, by giving me marks of her attention. But the reasons which detain me in this country are so powerful, that I find I must lay aside for the present so flattering a project, and must reserve that happiness to a time, which I shall always keep in my eye, when I may be able to pay my respects to your Ladyship at Paris. Meanwhile, it gives me pleasure to hear that the English nation have shown themselves sensible of the honour you have done them by this visit, and have endeavoured to express their regard in the best manner which the customs and manners of the country would permit. I am only afraid, that, to a person acquainted with the sociable

and conversible parties of France, the showy and dazzling crowds of London assemblies would afford but an indifferent entertainment, and that the love of retreat and solitude, with which the English are reproached, never appears more conspicuously, than when they draw together a multitude of five hundred persons. I was favoured, some time ago, with a letter from M. Rousseau, dated at Neufchatel, and also one from Lord Maréchal with regard to him. It is with great concern I find, that Neufchatel is not the place which he would choose for his retreat, that the King of Prussia's authority is scarce able to protect him against the bigots, and that the philosopher persists in his usual maxims, of refusing all the supplies, with which the monarch intended to gratify him. At the same time, both Lord Maréchal and M. Rousseau speak very doubtfully of any intention which the latter may have, of seeking his retreat in this Island.

I am afraid, that the liberty which we enjoy here, is counterbalanced by so many inconveniencies, as to discourage him from any project of settling among us. The chief inconvenience I can foresee is in our language, with which, I doubt, he is entirely unacquainted, and without which he could scarce find a tolerable society any where but in London; a place which may probably be too expensive for him. In many respects, this town would suit him better: there is here a very good society of men of letters, who would be ambitious of his acquaintance; and though living is not so cheap as in the provincial places of France, it is more reasonable than at London. But I am sorry

to find, that the people, whose company he would like best, have not the familiar use of the French tongue, and though he is a lover of solitude, it would be agreeable for him, and probably necessary, to have a few, with whom he could unbend his mind, and dissipate his cares and anxieties. Even to be acquainted with the language of the common people, is a great relief in every country, and supplies many scenes of observation and amusement to a person of a philosophical turn.

Nothing could make me happier than to contribute any way to the convenience and amusements of his retreat; and I even ventured to mention to Lord Maréchal, that I had an apartment in my house, which was not occupied, and which I would think myself happy, if so illustrious a fugitive would be pleased to accept of. I dared not to proceed any farther with a person of his turn; especially as the situation of my house is in the midst of a city, joined to the circumstances of our climate, which is not favourable, made me doubtful how far such an offer, even if accepted, might in the issue prove agreeable to him. Your Ladyship, by passing some time in England, will be enabled to judge what advice it would be proper to give him; and surely no case could more strongly interest a person of your generosity and humanity than that of M. Rousseau, whose genius and virtue, attended with such bad health and harassed with such violent persecution, seem peculiarly to challenge attention.

A considerable time ago, I used the freedom to send to Lord

Elibank a letter which I had done myself the honour to write to your Ladyship in answer to one with which you have favoured me. My Lord was then at London, and sent it under cover to his brother, Mr. Murray; but he tells me that it has miscarried.

I mention this circumstance, that your Ladyship may not think I could possibly be so much wanting in the duty which I owe you. The present comes under cover of M. Delarochette, whose acquaintance I had the happiness to enjoy during the short stay which he made in this country, and who was so good as to promise that he would have it safely delivered to you.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest regard,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's most obedient

and most humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

London, 22nd September, 1763.

MADAM,

I BELIEVE I ought to esteem myself extremely obliged to Lord Hertford, as upon many other accounts, so particularly for rousing me from a state of indolence and sloth, which I falsely dignified with the name of philosophy. For, to tell the truth, this lethargy was growing so strong upon me,

that I at first declined his Lordship's invitation to attend him in his embassy to France, though that invitation was both honourable and advantageous for me, and though it came from the most amiable Nobleman of the Court of England. But I now find, after his repeated applications have again embarked me in the world, that it is better for a man to keep in the midst of society; and I am particularly pleased with a scene of life, which will approach me near to your Ladyship, and give me an opportunity of cultivating the friendship of a person so much esteemed and so universally celebrated. I now give you warning, Madam, that your declarations in my favour have been so frequent and public, both in France and England, that you are bound in honour to maintain them, and that you cannot with a good grace retract upon a personal acquaintance the advantageous terms in which you have so often been pleased to speak of me. There is only one circumstance which can possibly excuse your displeasure against me; if I should be wanting in my regard and attachment towards you; since such a conduct must prove me a man not to be bound either by merit or obligation.

To shew your Ladyship that I pretend to have some interest with you, I intended as soon as I had the honour of seeing you, to employ my good offices in endeavouring to remove a displeasure which M. Rousseau imagines you had contracted against him. Lord Maréchal, some weeks ago, showed me a letter from him, in which he implores my Lord's

intercession for that purpose; on the supposition, that this Nobleman would meet you at London before your departure. M. Rousseau said, that he knew not how to make advances to any person; and that you was even the only one whom he could run after, when he found you was deserting him.

I understand by Lord Maréchal that you was displeased with our savage philosopher for refusing in so peremptory a manner the advantages offered him by the King of Prussia; and my Lord devolved over to me the task of giving you satisfaction on that head. But I find that your Ladyship, by previously forgiving this one caprice more in a man, who is so little regulated by the common rules of conduct, has deprived me of all merit in my intercession. I wish your Ladyship could persuade M. de Guerchy to come to his station here in London, that I might the sooner have an opportunity of throwing myself at your feet, and of assuring you of the regard with which I am,

Madam,

Your Ladyship's most obedient

and most humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Paris, 19th October, 1763.

MADAM,

IT was with much regret I received the letter with which your Ladyship was pleased to honour me. Your Ladyship was the first person to whom I had proposed to pay my respects at Paris; and I found myself disappointed, for some time, of so flattering an expectation; but I was still more afflicted on account of your bad health, which had detained you in the country.

I had however the pleasure soon after to meet with your good friend, M. Dusson, who assured me, that you had never been in any danger, and that you was now in a fair way of recovery.

We both agreed however that the consequences of your distemper were sometimes troublesome, and required care and attention to prevent them; and it is in order to recommend that attention I give you the present trouble. I have as yet had but two days' experience of this city; but have great reason already to praise the politeness and hospitality, for which it is so famous. A more quiet manner of sliding through life would perhaps suit better my habits and turn of mind; but it is impossible not to

be grateful to persons that show such a desire of pleasing one, and making him happy.

With great regard,

Madam,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Motiers, le 28 Décembre, 1763.

VOTRE lettre, Madame, me fait un plaisir d'autant plus sensible, que je m'y attendais moins. Je craignais, il est vrai, d'avoir perdu votre amitié; et sans avoir à me reprocher cette perte, je la mettais au nombre des malheurs qui m'accablent, et que je ne me suis pas attirés. Je suis charmé pour moi, Madame, et je suis bien aise aussi pour vous, qu'il n'en soit rien. Il ne tiendra surement pas à moi, que je ne conserve toute ma vie un bien qui m'est si précieux. L'intérêt que je vous ai vu prendre à mes disgraces ne peut pas plus sortir de mon cœur, que n'en sortiront les sentimens qu'il avoit conçus pour vous, même auparavant.

Je me réjouis de n'apprendre votre rougeole et votre mélancolie qu'après leur guérison. Tâchez d'être aussi bien quitte de l'une que de l'autre. Eh, comment la mélancolie osoit-elle se loger dans une âme si belle, parée d'un habit qui lui va si bien, faite à

tant d'égards pour faire adorer la vertu, et pour se rendre heureuse par elle? Ne dussiez-vous jouir que du bien que vous faites, je n'imagine pas ce qui devroit manquer à votre bonheur.

Après vous avoir parlé de vous, comment oser vous parler de moi? Mon ame surchargée travaille à soutenir ses disgraces, sans s'en laisser accabler, et depuis l'entrée de l'hiver il ne manque aux maux que mon corps souffre, que le degré nécessaire pour s'en délivrer tout-à-fait. Dans cet état vous me demandez quels sont mes projets. Grace au ciel, je n'en fais plus, Madame; ce n'est plus la peine d'en faire; c'est une inquiétude dont mes maux m'ont enfin délivré. Le dernier, le plus chéri, celui qui ne peut même à présent sortir de mon cœur, étoit de réjoindre Milord Maréchal; de donner mes derniers jours à mon ami, mon protecteur, mon père, au seul homme qui m'ait tendu la main dans ma misère, et qui m'en ait consolé. Mais cet espoir étoit trop doux; il m'échappe encore; mon triste état me l'ôte; il ne m'en reste presque plus que le désir. A moins que le reste de l'hiver ne m'épargne, et que le retour de la belle saison ne fasse un miracle, je n'attends plus d'autre changement à mon sort ici bas, que son terme; il ne me reste qu'à souffrir et mourir. Cela se peut faire ici tout comme ailleurs; et si je ne puis réjoindre Milord Maréchal, je ne songe plus à changer de place. Ce dont j'ai besoin désormais se trouve partout.

Il y a long-tems que je n'ai des nouvelles de Milord Maréchal. Je soupçonne que dans le long trajet nos lettres s'égarent; car je suis parfaitement sûr qu'il ne m'oublie pas, et j'en ai

bien la preuve par ce qu'il vient de faire en ma faveur auprès de vous. Ah, ce digne homme! au bout de la terre il seroit mon bienfaiteur encore, et mon cœur iroit l'y chercher. Ayez la bonté, Madame, de lui faire parvenir l'incluse; je le connois, je sais qu'il m'aime, et vous lui ferez plaisir presque autant qu'à moi.

Vous voulez que je vous donne des nouvelles de Mademoiselle Le Vasseur. C'est une bonne et honnête personne, digne de l'honneur que vous lui faites. Chaque jour ajoute à mon estime pour elle; et la seule chose qui me rend désormais l'habitation de ce pays déplaisante, est de l'y laisser sans amis après moi qui la protègent contre l'avarice des gens de loi qui dissiperont mes guenilles et visiteront mes chiffons. Du reste, l'air de ce pays lui est plus favorable qu'à moi, et elle s'y porte mieux qu'à Montmorenci, quoiqu'elle s'y plaise moins. Permettez-lui, Madame, de vous faire ici ses remercîmens très-humbles, et de joindre ses respects aux miens.

(TRANSLATION.)

Motiers, 28th December, 1763.

YOUR letter, Madam, affords me a degree of pleasure so much the greater, as it was by me less expected. I was apprehensive, it is true, that I had forfeited your friendship, and, though I had no cause to throw the blame of this loss upon myself, I yet ranked this loss among the misfortunes which

overwhelm me, and which I have not drawn upon myself. I am pleased, on my own account, Madam, and I am equally satisfied, on yours, that this is not the case. Most assuredly it shall not be through any fault on my part, if I do not preserve, as long as I live, a treasure which to me is so valuable. The interest which I have seen you take in my misfortunes, can as little be obliterated from my heart, as can the sentiments it had conceived for you, even previous to this period.

I am rejoiced that I did not hear of your measles and your melancholy, till after your recovery. Endeavour to be as completely free from the one, as from the other. Ah! how could melancholy dare to take up her abode in so beautiful a soul, adorned with a garment which so admirably becomes its wearer; formed in so many points of view to cause virtue to be adored, and, through her, to ensure its own happiness? Were you even doomed to experience no other enjoyment than what results from your own practical goodness, I can conceive nothing which could with justice be wanting to your happiness.

After having spoken of you, how venture, Madam, to speak of myself? My soul overcharged, struggles to bear up under its misfortunes, without suffering itself to be weighed down by them; and since the commencement of the winter, nothing is wanting to fill up the measure of the ills which my body suffers, but the precise degree necessary to deliver it from them for ever. Thus circumstanced, you ask, what are my projects? Heaven be praised, I no longer form any, Madam;

it is not worth my while to form any;—this is a disquietude, from which my woes have at length delivered me. The last, the most cherished, that which even at this moment cannot be torn from my heart, was to rejoin My Lord Marechal; to consecrate my last days to my friend, my protector, my father; to the only man, who has stretched out a succouring hand to me in my misery, and who has brought me consolation. But this hope was too pleasing; it again eludes me; my deplorable situation deprives me of it; scarcely is ought more of it left me, than the wish. Unless the remainder of the winter deal more tenderly with me, and the return of the fine season operate a miracle in my favour, I no longer look forward to any other change in my destiny here below, than its termination. All that remains for me to perform, is to suffer and to die. This may be done here, as well as any where else; and if I cannot rejoin My Lord Marechal, I give up all thoughts of a change of my abode. What I shall henceforth have occasion for, may be found every where.

It is a long time since I have had tidings of My Lord Marechal. I suspect that, in consequence of the great distance which separates us, our letters miscarry; for I am perfectly confident that he does not forget me; and of this I have a convincing proof, in what he has recently done in my favour, in your own instance. Ah! what a worthy man! At the very extremity of the earth, he would still continue my benefactor, and my heart would go thither in search of him. Have the

goodness, Madam, to forward the inclosed to him: I know him; I know that he loves me, and you will occasion him almost as much pleasure as myself.

You wish me to give you some tidings of Mademoiselle Le Vasseur. She is a good, kind-hearted person, worthy the honour which you confer upon her. Every day adds to my esteem for her; and the only thing which renders the abode in this country unpleasant to me, is to leave her without friends, who, after my death, may protect her against the avarice of the lawyers, who will dilapidate my rags and search my scribblings. For the rest, the air of this country is more favourable to her than to me; and she enjoys a better state of health here, than at Montmorenci; though she does not find the abode so pleasing to her. Permit her, Madam, to return you her very humble thanks, and to join her respects to mine.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Paris, 15th May, 1764.

I SHALL not tell you, Madam, whether or not I regret very much your absence, or feel a great blank on account of my not seeing you from time to time. You will believe in this matter as you please: what I can say will pass for nothing; you may judge upon the evidence before you: I

am afraid that, as I sit down at present to write to you without any subject, you will conjecture that I think of you often, and that the pleasure of your society, (shall I say, of your friendship?) is not easily made up by other connexions or conversation.

But I write to you not so entirely without a subject as you may perhaps imagine. I must inform you, Madam, not in the style of a *petit ministre*, as you used to call me sometimes, but in that of a man who lives in the *grand monde*, that the journey to St. Hubert is fixed for this evening, and all the Ladies named by the King, who are to attend him on this critical occasion. Try your sagacity to guess them, and I shall name them afterwards; they are four; Madame De Mirepoix, Madame De Grammont, D'Aiguilly, and De Chateau Renaut. The two last are not supposed to be of any consequence, and Madame De Chateau-Renaut has declined the journey on account of her health. What glory for you, and by consequence for me, if this piece of important intelligence reaches your hands before it comes to those of the French Ambassador in Holland! There was an idle story spread about in Paris before you left it, and I suppose that you have before-hand known the falsity of it—it was, that Madame De Mirepoix had wrote to the King, offering graciously to occupy the apartment, and consequently to accept of the credit of the deceased favourite, and that his Majesty was very much offended with the proposal. An old courtier, well informed (for I must talk mysteriously) told me to-day the foundation of this rumour, which, he said, he knew as certainly as if he had been

present at the whole transaction. The lady wrote a letter to the King, without mentioning a word of the matter, either to her brother or sister in law, or any soul living. This letter contained, first a condolence for their loss of a common friend; secondly, assurances of attachment both from duty and inclination; thirdly, (but I know not if it was divided so regularly like a sermon) some regret that her age would thenceforth deprive her of the pleasure which she had always felt of paying her court to His Majesty: she begged at the same time, that if in any future time she had any application to make, not in her own behalf, for she neither expected nor desired any thing, but in behalf of her friends, she might be allowed to address herself immediately to His Majesty, without having recourse to any of his ministers.

Next day the King said to the Prince de Beauveau, who was in waiting, *Here is an answer to the Maréchale: pray deliver it to her.* The Prince, not looking at the address, replied, Is it to the *Maréchale de Luxembourg*, Sir? *No*, replied the King, *to your sister.* He accordingly carried it to her, not without expressing some marks of surprize at this secret transaction. The lady immediately told him that he should know the whole of the matter. She read to him a copy of her own letter, and then opened the King's before him. It contained, after a proper return of the compliments, an expression of the pleasure which he always reaped from her company; and he opposed himself at the same time to the notion, that her age would thenceforth deprive him of that satisfaction: but as to the other point, he

kept a profound silence, which, I suppose, does not imply consent. For silence has that privilege only where a gentleman addresses himself to a lady. But, Madam, I have another circumstance more interesting to inform you of: I mean, a circumstance more interesting to me and your friends in Paris. I am just now told, that Lord Holderness has bespoke two dinners at the Hôtel de Brancas, one on the 15th, and the other on the 16th of June. This is such a base piece of treachery, so contrary to all good faith, to all compact and agreement by which we delivered you into his hands, that I cannot exclaim sufficiently against it. Is such a precious trust to be dallied with in this manner? Are days or even hours and minutes of no consequence in these matters? What may be dreaded from a man, who can sport with the most sacred ties, by which a person of honour can be bound? In short, Madam, I suspect no less than an *enlèvement* in the case. My only comfort is, that, as both France and England are so deeply interested to wrest his prey from him, he will find protection no where but among the Turks or Tartars; and these are too distant to be of any service to him. Be only assured, dear Madam, and with the greatest seriousness, though at the end of a foolish letter, that were he to carry you further, my wishes for your welfare would still follow you, and that nothing can diminish, and scarce augment, my respectful attachment towards you.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Compiegne, 6th July, 1764.

I KNOW not how it came into my head, dear Madam, that you was to write to me first, after my arrival in this place; whether because you said so, or because I wished it, or because I thought it requisite, in order to assure me that I was not troublesome by my frequent and long letters. Certain it is, that I have had a great inclination for some days past to pay my addresses to you, but have restrained myself, from reason, as I imagined, but really I believe from pride and humour, surely the most misplaced in the world. But it has happened very luckily, that the Maréchale de Mirepoix has given me a commission for you, which saves my countenance, and affords me a plausible pretence for writing; and I believe really, without giving myself too great airs of fortitude, that, were it not for so good a handle, I could have held out two or three days longer at the least. For you must not imagine, but I make advantage of the ten leagues of interval that lie between us, and feel already some progress in the noble resolution I have formed of forgetting you entirely before the end of summer.

But if I succeed in this project, I shall have all the glory to myself, and shall owe nothing to the pleasure and amusements of the Court.

We live in a kind of solitude and retirement at Compiegne; at least I do, who, having nothing but a few general acquaintance at Court, and not caring to make more, have given myself up almost entirely to study and retreat. You cannot imagine, Madam, with what pleasure I return as it were to my natural element, and what satisfaction I enjoy in reading and musing, and sauntering, amid the agreeable scenes that surround me. But yes, you can easily enough imagine it; you have yourself formed the same resolution: you are determined this summer to tie the broken thread of your studies and literary amusements. If you have been so happy as to execute your purpose, you are almost in the same state as myself, and are at present wandering along the banks of the same beautiful river, perhaps with the same books in your hand, a Racine, I suppose, or a Virgil, and despise all other pleasure and amusement. Alas! why am I not so near you, that I could see you for half an hour a day, and confer with you on these subjects?

But this ejaculation, methinks, does not lead me directly in my purposed road, of forgetting you. It is a short digression, which is soon over: and that I may return to the right path, I shall give you some account of the state of the Court; I mean, the exterior face of it; for I know no more; and if I did, I am become so great a politician, that nothing should make me reveal it. The King divides his evenings every week after the following manner: one he gives to the public, when he sups at the grand convent: two he passes with his own family: two in a so-

ciety of men: and to make himself amends, two he passes with ladies, Madame De Grammont, usually, Madame De Mirepoix, and Madame De Beauveau. This last Princess passed three evenings in this manner at the Hermitage immediately before her departure, which was on Monday last. I think her absence a great loss to that society: I am so presumptuous as to think it one to myself. I found her as obliging and as friendly as if she had never conversed with Kings, and never were a politician. I really doubt much of her talent for politics. Pray what is your opinion? Is she qualified, otherwise than by having great sense and an agreeable conversation, to make progress in the road to favour? And are not these qualities rather an incumbrance to her? I have met her once or twice, with another lady, in whose favour I am much prepossessed: she seems agreeable, well behaved, judicious, a great reader, speaks as if she had sentiment, and was superior to the vulgar train of amusements. I should have been willing, notwithstanding my present love of solitude, to have cultivated an acquaintance with her, but she did not say any thing so obliging to me as to give me encouragement. Would you conjecture that I mean the Countess of Tessé? I know not whether you are acquainted with that lady. But I shall never have done with this idle train of conversation; and therefore, to cut things short, I kiss your hands most humbly and devoutly, and bid you Adieu.

P.S. I had almost forgot the Maréchale's commission. It is, that she is to be at Paris on Tuesday next, in order to stay till

Sunday: she would be glad to see you there, especially as I told her, that you intended to be in town about the same time, for the same purpose, of paying a visit to the Maréchale de Luxembourg.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Compiegne, 14th July, 1764.

I SHALL venture to say, dear Madam, that no letter, which even you have ever wrote, conveyed more satisfaction than did that with which you favoured me. What pleasure to receive testimonies and assurances of good-will from a person whom we highly value, and whose sentiments are of such importance to us! You could not possibly have done an action more charitable, than to speak to me in so friendly a manner. You have thereby supplied me for a long time with matter for the most agreeable musing; and I shall henceforth, I hope, bid defiance to all returns of diffidence and jealousy. I confess with shame, that I am but too subject to this sentiment, even in friendship. I never doubt of my friend's probity or honour; but often of his attachment to me, and sometimes, as I have afterwards found, without reason. If such was my disposition even in youth, you may judge that, having arrived at a time of life when I can less expect to please, I must be more subject to inroads of suspicion. Common sense requires that I should

keep at a distance from all attachments that can imply passion. But it must surely be the height of folly, to lay myself at the mercy of a person whose situation seems calculated to inspire doubt, and who, being so little at her own disposal, could not be able, even if willing, to seek such remedies as might appease that tormenting sentiment.

Should I meet with one, in any future time, (for to be sure I know of none such at present) who was endowed with graces and charms beyond all expression, whose character and understanding were equally an object of esteem, as her person was of tenderness; I ought to fly her company, to avoid all connexion with her, even such as might bear the name of friendship; and to endeavour to forget her as soon as possible. I know not if it would be prudent even to bid her adieu: surely, it would be highly imprudent to receive from her any testimonies of friendship and regard. But who, in that situation, could have resolution to reject them? Who would not drink up the poison with joy and satisfaction?

But let us return, dear Madam, from imaginary suppositions to our real selves. I am much pleased that your leisure allows you to betake yourself to your old occupation of reading; and that your relish for it still remains entire. I have frequently, in the course of my life, met with interruptions, from business and dissipation; yet always returned to my closet with pleasure. I have no other prospect for easing the burthen of old age than in

these enjoyments; and if I sometimes join the chimerical project of relaxing the severities of study, by the society of a person dear to me, and who could have indulgence for me, I consider it a pleasing dream, in which I can repose no confidence. My only comfort is, that I am myself a person free as the air we breathe, and that, wherever such a blessing might present itself, I could there fix my habitation.

You tell me, that, though you are still exposed to the attacks of melancholy, it is of the softer kind, and such as you would not desire to be rid of. I shall not, any farther than you allow me, indulge my conjectures. You were offended at my former ones, and I wish they may be false. But it is impossible for my thoughts not to return often to a subject, in which I am so deeply interested. If there are any obstacles to your happiness, I should wish they were of a nature that could be removed; and that they admitted of some other remedy than the one you sometimes mention, on which I cannot think without terror. I feel the reflection this instant, as the stroke of a poniard at my heart; and the tear at present starts in my eye when it recurs to me. Is it necessary that my sympathy too should furnish you with arms against me?

But I perceive, dear Madam, or shall I say, my amiable pupil, that while I am answering the second part of your letter, I have entirely forgot the first; which yet surely is not of a nature wholly indifferent to me.

It gives me a sensible uneasiness that my friend's performance has not gained your approbation. I am more sorry on his account, than because you condemn my judgment, which I am sensible may easily be warped by friendship and partiality. I acknowledge too, that most of your objections, and indeed all of them, are well-founded. I could add some others, which a more frequent perusal of the piece has suggested to me. I always disliked the character of Glenalvon, as being that of such a finished and black villain as either is not in nature, or requires very little genius in the poet to have imagined. Such a personage seems only to be a gross artifice in the writer, when the plot requires an incident, which he knows not how to introduce naturally. Glenalvon is a kind of *Diabolus ex machina;* more blameable than the *Deus ex machina*, which the ancient critics condemned as an unartificial manner of unraveling a plot. But though I allow all these objections, and more which would occur to you on a second perusal, I cannot still but flatter myself that the tragedy of Douglas is a work of merit, from the sensible pathetic which runs through the whole. The value of a theatrical piece can less be determined by an analysis of its conduct, than by the ascendant which it gains over the heart, and by the strokes of nature which are interspersed through it. But I am afraid that it has not affected you to the degree I could wish, even in this particular, and that you have not found in it any such beauties as can compensate for its defects.

If such be your judgment on a second perusal (for you must allow me to appeal from your first judgment to your second, and I shall surely never think of any other appeal), if such, I say, be the case, I can do nothing but acquiesce. Your nation, your sex, and, above all, the peculiar delicacy of your taste, give you a title to pronounce on these subjects.

I can even kiss the hand, with pleasure and passion, which signs the verdict against me: I could only have kissed it with more pleasure, had it acquitted my friend.

Allow me, dear Madam, before I bid you adieu (since it is necessary to come to that at last), to ask you, whether you do not come to Paris about the middle of August, and stay there for some time? My question proceeds not merely from curiosity. I could wish to enjoy your company, before the return of winter recalls us to our former dissipations.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Compiegne, 29th of July, 1764.

You had great reason, dear Madam, to say that your letter would give me pleasure; for surely I never felt more than I received from it. What amiable, what unaffected, what natural expressions of good-will and friendship!

I can only deserve them by my sincere attachment to you; and if that will give me a title, I am fully possessed of it. Still, I am uneasy (you will wonder that I can now have any complaint), but I am uneasy, that, notwithstanding all you can say, I should not have the prospect of passing much of my time with you. Our connexions and course of life led us into very different roads: but my comfort is, that these may alter; my regard for you is unalterable: I shall firmly believe the same of your indulgence towards me.

I set out in a few hours for Villars-Cotterets, to pass a day or two there. You will guess some part of my conversation with Madame de Barbantane. Poor Tiepolo, the Venetian ambassador, left us a few days ago: he seems to me in a very dangerous state of health. I asked him if he did not leave France with regret. Yes, said he, I leave many persons there with regret, but above all one lady, whom I esteem the most accomplished in it, and whom I was just beginning to make acquaintance with. I regret that I had not seized sooner the opportunities of cultivating her friendship. I believe him quite sincere in this declaration, nor do I suspect that he talked so in order to flatter me. The Prince of Conti passed two days here, and I was twice at his door to pay my court to him; but had not the good fortune to find him at home.

The Duke of York writes, that he is to be in France the latter end of August, in order to pass two or three months with us. His lodgings are already hired in Paris. His company will do

us a great deal of honour, but honour is not to be bought without some sacrifices. I hope his Royal Highness is of your acquaintance, and that he will choose me for his conductor when he waits upon you. I kiss your hands, my dear, my amiable friend, with the greatest devotion and most sincere affection. Among other obligations, which I owe you, without number, you have saved me from a total indifference towards every thing in human life. I was falling very fast into that state of mind, and it is perhaps worse than even the inquietudes of the most unfortunate passion: how much, then, is it inferior to the sweetness of your commerce and friendship! I bid you again adieu.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

On Saturday last, I called at poor Madam D'Arti's, and received for answer at the door that she was better, and that there were great hopes of her recovery. I did not hear of her death till Sunday evening. I find it gives general concern, both to those who did know, and to those who did not know her. I came yesterday afternoon to tender my compliments to you and to the Prince of Conti, when I heard of your departure for the country. If the Prince of Conti thinks of staying at Lisle-Adam beyond this week, I shall certainly pay

my respects there, to you and to His Highness. I beg of you to assure him, that I take sincerely a part in his afflictions, especially that for a person, whom I knew to be possessed of so much merit. It is needless for me to inform you, how much every thing that interests you is and ever will be the object of my concern.

Tuesday Morning.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

I PASSED the last evening in company with Gatti at Madame de Rochefort's. Never was man in such agonies of despair: he has all the sensibility of an honest man, whose reputation is unjustly attacked, and who finds the world against him. He talks of leaving the world, of flying instantly from Paris, of throwing up life: you would have been moved with compassion for him, and could not but have entertained a good opinion of his character. After all, what has he been guilty of? A mistake. Good God! reproach a physician with a mistake; as if they were not, all of them, in danger of a mistake, in every judgment which they form. I beseech you recall your usual generosity; and protect innocence, perhaps merit, opposed by calumny and prejudice. He has heard, dear

Madam, that you are his enemy: I find that it is a sensible addition to his other distresses.

Mademoiselle L'Espinasse is dangerously ill of the small pox. I am glad to find that D'Alembert forgets his philosophy on that occasion.

Paris, Thursday.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

I COULD never yet accuse myself, dear Madam, of hypocrisy or dissimulation; and I was surely guilty of these vices in the highest degree, if I wrote you a letter, which carried with it any marks of indifference. What *I said* in particular, I cannot entirely recollect, but I well remember in general what *I felt*, which was a great regard and attachment to you, not increased indeed (for that was scarce possible) but rendered more agreeable to myself, from the marks you had given me of your friendship and confidence: I adhere to these; I will never, but with my life, be persuaded to part with the hold which you have been pleased to afford me: you may cut me to pieces, limb by limb; but like those pertinacious animals of my country, I shall expire still attached to you, and you will in vain attempt to get free. For this reason, Madam, I set at

defiance all those menaces, which you obliquely throw out against me. Do you seriously think, that it is at present in your power to determine whether I shall be your friend or not? In every thing else your authority over me is without controul. But with all your ingenuity, you will scarce contrive to use me so ill, that I shall not still better bear it: and after all, you will find yourself obliged, from pity, or generosity, or friendship, to take me back into your service. At least, this will probably be the case, till you find one who loves you more sincerely and values you more highly; which with all your merit, I fancy it will not be easy for you to do. I know, that I am here furnishing you with arms against myself: you may be tempted to tyrannize over me, in order to try how far I will practise my doctrine of passive obedience: but I hope also that you will hold this soliloquy to yourself: This poor fellow, I see, is resolved never to leave me: let me take compassion on him; and endeavour to render our intercourse as agreeable to him and as little burdensome to myself as possible. If you fall, Madam, into this way of thinking, as you must at last, I ask no farther; and all your menaces will vanish into smoke.

Good God! how much am I fallen from the airs which I at first gave myself! You may remember, that a little after our *personal* acquaintance, I told you, that you was obliged *à soutenir la gageure*, and could not in decency find fault with me, however I should think proper to behave myself. Now, I throw myself at your feet, and give you nothing but marks of patience and

long-suffering and submission. But I own, that matters are at present upon a more proper and more natural footing; and long may they remain so.

I went to Villars-Cotterets, as I told you, on Sunday last, and I stayed till Tuesday. Madame de Vierville arrived on Monday evening, whom I questioned about the manner of life at Staure. Nothing could be more ravishing, more delightful than her description of it, and of the person who inspired gaiety and amenity into all around her. And can you treat me with contempt because I am willing to be that person's slave? For, let me tell you, there is an expression in your letter against slavery, which I take a little to myself, as said against me; but I still maintain

> Nunquam libertas gratior extat
> Quam sub rege pio.

Pray, go to your Latin dictionary to interpret this passage: you will find that *regina*, if it would agree with the measure, would suit much better with the sense.

What can I say, Dear Madam, to the *arrangement* which you are pleased to communicate to me? Can I think of it without satisfaction, and without vexation? I shall be in Paris on the 11th or 12th of the month, perhaps a day sooner or a day later. I shall watch the opportunity, and endeavour that you shall not pass without my paying my respects to you. The party you propose after that, does me great honour, and still greater pleasure.

But, in the present state of our affairs, I cannot promise that it will be possible for me to be above a day absent. And, to add to my embarrassments, there is just now arrived in France a very ancient and very intimate friend of mine, Mr. Elliot, who is wholly a stranger there, and whom I cannot entirely neglect. He is justly regarded as one of the ablest and most considerable men among us; he was my friend long before I knew any thing of the name of Boufflers, except that of the famous and virtuous Maréchal of the last reign. Is it not strange, that I should think my attention to him an incumbrance on the present occasion? I know not by what accident I did not receive your letter till yesterday. I will not begin a new sheet, lest I be tempted to give you eight pages. Adieu, adieu.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Paris, 18*th of August*, 1764.

You will never be able, Madam, to imagine the disagreeable situation in which I passed several days of this week, and still less will you be able to conjecture the cause. About an hour after I had sent off my last pacquet, a friend of mine entered my room, who informed me, with a certainty which admitted of no doubt, that you, dear Madam, you (this word cannot be too frequently repeated, in order to give em-

phasis to the sentence and augment surprise), that you, I say, had occasioned all the quarrel between Mr. Murray and me, by telling him of the bad opinion I had of him and his lawsuit, &c. &c. My friend said, that he knew this not only by Mr. Murray's inability to name any other person, whom I had endeavoured to prepossess against him, but also by circumstances of conversations between you and me, which Mr. Murray repeated, and which, indeed, had some foundation in reality. Thus you, who of all human creatures are the least *tracassière*, are here the author of a fray; you, who have created me so many new friends, are here robbing me of my ancient ones. Have you ever had any experience of the situation of our mind, when we are very angry with the person whom we passionately love? You have, surely: can any thing be more tormenting and more absurd? How many projects of revenge, which we fondly cherish, and then fly from with horror! How many images of tenderness, which pride and indignation make us instantly regret! I thought of means, by which I might mortify and punish a person, who had behaved so treacherously towards me; for this epithet I thought your conduct richly merited: but I then reflected; is this the person for whose welfare I would sacrifice my existence; and can I now think of taking pleasure in her pain and uneasiness? I was in this state of mind when I received yours. The very sight of your hand-writing, I own, began the cure: but the perusal of those soft and obliging and amicable expressions, which you employ, penetrated me to the soul; and I saw a new

world around me. Those circumstances of conduct, which I had before clothed in so many black colours, and from which I drew so many strange inferences, now appeared only a trivial indiscretion; which I was glad you could sometimes be guilty of, in order to excuse much greater of my own. Accept of my penitence, Madam, for sentiments, which, though confined within my own bosom, I regard no less as violations of my duty towards you: accept also my thanks, for taking me so soon from a state of mind, in which my folly might have otherwise long detained me.

I was now in such a fit of joy and alacrity, that I instantly sat down and wrote to Mr. Murray; desiring an interview with him, assuring him that I never meant him any prejudice, and, in short, employing every expression that may soften and gain him. If I can help it, there shall no traces remain of the ill you have done me. I hate it less because it is an ill, than because it is so dissimilar to the hand which sent it. I also effaced from my letter to his brother, that passage, which appears a little contemptuous to your friend. I knew it would not disoblige his brother; but I conjectured that it had displeased you.

I beseech you, dear Madam, continue to like me a little: for otherwise I shall not be able in a little time to endure myself.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Motiers, le 26 Août, 1764.

Après les preuves touchantes, Madame, que j'ai eues de votre amitié dans les plus cruels momens de ma vie, il y auroit à moi de l'ingratitude de n'y pas compter toujours. Mais il faut pardonner beaucoup à mon état; la confiance abandonne les malheureux, et je sens, au plaisir que m'a fait votre lettre, que j'ai besoin d'être ainsi rassuré quelquefois. Cette consolation ne pouvoit me venir plus à-propos. Après tant de pertes irréparables, et, en dernier lieu, celle de M. de Luxembourg, il m'importe de sentir qu'il me reste des biens assez précieux pour valoir la peine de vivre. Le moment où j'eus le bonheur de le connoître, ressembloit beaucoup à celui où je l'ai perdu; dans l'un et dans l'autre j'étois affligé, délaissé, malade. Il me consola de tout: qui me consolera de lui? Les amis que j'avois avant de le perdre; car mon cœur usé par les maux, et déjà durci par les ans, est fermé désormais à tout nouvel attachement.

Je ne puis penser, Madame, que dans les critiques qui regardent l'éducation de Monsieur votre fils, vous compreniez ce que, sur le parti que vous avez pris de l'envoyer à Leyde, j'ai écrit au Chevalier de Lorenzi. Critiquer quelqu'un, c'est blâmer

dans le public sa conduite; mais dire son sentiment à un ami commun sur un pareil sujet, ne s'appellera jamais critiquer, à moins que l'amitié n'impose la loi de ne dire jamais ce qu'on pense, même en choses où les gens du meilleur sens peuvent n'être pas du même avis. Après la manière dont j'ai constamment pensé et parlé de vous, Madame, je me décrierois moi-même si je m'avisois de vous critiquer. Je trouve, à la vérité, beaucoup d'inconvénient à envoyer les jeunes gens dans les Universités; mais je trouve aussi que, selon les circonstances, il peut y en avoir davantage à ne pas le faire, et l'on n'a pas toujours en ceci le choix du plus grand bien, mais du moindre mal. D'ailleurs, une fois la nécessité de ce parti supposée, je crois, comme vous, qu'il y a moins de danger en Hollande, que partout ailleurs.

Je suis ému de ce que vous m'avez marqué de MM. les Comtes de Bentink. Jugez, Madame, si la bienveillance des hommes de ce mérite n'est pas précieuse, à moi que celle même des gens que je n'estime pas, subjugue toujours! Je ne sais ce qu'on n'eût point fait de moi, par les caresses! Heureusement, on ne s'est pas avisé de me gâter là-dessus. On a travaillé sans relâche à donner à mon cœur, et peut-être aussi à mon génie, le ressort que naturellement ils n'avoient pas. J'étois né foible; les mauvais traitemens m'ont fortifié. A force de vouloir m'avilir, on m'a rendu fier.

Vous avez la bonté, Madame, de vouloir des détails sur ce qui me regarde. Que vous dirois-je? Rien n'est plus uni que ma

vie ; rien n'est plus borné que mes projets. Je vis au jour la journée, sans souci du lendemain ; ou plutôt, j'achève de vivre avec plus de lenteur que je n'avois compté. Je ne m'en irai pas plutôt qu'il ne plaît à la nature ; mais ses longueurs ne laissent pas de m'embarrasser, car je n'ai plus rien à faire ici. Le dégoût de toutes choses me livre toujours plus à l'indolence et à l'oisiveté. Les maux physiques me donnent seuls un peu d'activité. Le séjour que j'habite, quoiqu'assez sain pour les autres hommes, est pernicieux pour mon état ; ce qui fait que, pour me dérober aux injures de l'air et aux importunités des désœuvrés, je vais errant par le pays durant la belle saison ; mais aux approches de l'hiver, qui est ici très-rude et très-long, il faut revenir et souffrir. Il y a long-tems que je cherche à déloger ; mais où aller ? Comment m'arranger ? J'ai tout à la fois l'embarras de l'indigence et des richesses ; toute espèce de soin m'effraie ; le transport de mes guenilles et de mes livres par ces montagnes est pénible et coûteux. C'est bien la peine de déloger de ma maison, dans l'attente de déloger bientôt de mon corps ! Au lieu que, restant où je suis, j'ai des journées délicieuses, errant sans souci, sans projet, sans affaire, de bois en bois, et de rocher en rocher, rêvant toujours et ne pensant point. Je donnerois tout au monde pour savoir la botanique ; c'est la véritable occupation d'un corps ambulant et d'un esprit paresseux. Je ne répondrois pas que je n'eusse la folie d'essayer de l'apprendre, si je savois par où commencer. Quant à ma situation, du côté des ressources,

n'en soyez point en peine. Le nécessaire, même abondant, ne m'a point manqué jusqu'ici, et probablement ne me manquera pas sitôt. Loin de vous gronder de vos offres, Madame, je vous en remercie ; mais vous conviendrez qu'elles seroient mal placées, si je m'en prévalois avant le besoin.

Vous vouliez des détails ; vous devez être contente. Je suis très-content des vôtres, à cela près que je n'ai jamais pu lire le nom du lieu que vous habitez. Peut-être le connois-je ; et il me seroit bien doux de vous y suivre, du moins par l'imagination. Au reste, je vous plains de n'en être encore qu'à la philosophie. Je suis bien plus avancé que vous, Madame :—sauf mon devoir et mes amis, me voilà revenu à rien.

Je ne trouve pas le Chevalier si déraisonnable, puisqu'il vous divertit. S'il n'étoit que déraisonnable, il n'y parviendroit surement pas. Il est bien à plaindre dans les accès de sa goutte, car on souffre cruellement : mais il a du moins l'avantage de souffrir sans risque. Des scélérats ne l'assassineront pas, et personne n'a intérêt à le tuer. Etes-vous à portée, Madame, de voir souvent Madame la Maréchale ? Dans la triste circonstance où elle se trouve, elle a bien besoin de tous ses amis, et surtout de vous. Je suis aussi sensible à l'assurance que vous me donnez de la continuation des bontés de M. le Prince de Conti, que si je n'y avois pas toujours compté : les épreuves par où j'ai passé m'ayant laissé le même qu'il en honora, je puis espérer ne mériter jamais de les perdre.

Je n'ai reçu votre lettre, Madame, qu'au retour d'un voyage de trois semaines, ce qui m'a empêché d'y répondre aussitôt que je l'aurois dû.

(TRANSLATION.)

Motiers, 26th August, 1764.

AFTER the affecting proofs, Madam, which I have had of your friendship, in the most cruel moments of my life, it would be ungrateful, on my part, not to rely with confidence upon it. But great allowances ought to be made for my situation; the wretched are without confidence, and I feel, from the pleasure which your letter has afforded me, that I stand in need of being occasionally encouraged in this manner. Never could this consolation have arrived at a more seasonable moment. After such a number of irreparable losses, and, most recent of all, that of M. de Luxembourg, it is to me a matter of the first importance to feel, that I have still something left of sufficient value to render life supportable. The moment in which I had the happiness to become acquainted with him, bore a strong resemblance to that in which I have lost him. In both cases, I was overwhelmed with affliction, neglect, and sickness. He was my consolation under all these ills. Who shall console me for his loss?

None but the friends I had, before I lost him; for my heart, worn out with woes, and already rendered callous by the lapse of years, is henceforth shut up and barricaded to every new attachment.

I cannot believe, Madam, that you should consider as a criticism upon the education of your son, what I have written to the Chevalier de Lorenzi, concerning the step you have taken, in sending him to Leyden. To criticise a person, signifies, to pass public censure on his conduct; but to speak one's real sentiments to a mutual friend on such a subject, can never be called criticising, unless it be one of the laws imposed by friendship never to speak as one thinks, even in matters, where persons of the best discernment may differ in opinion. After the manner in which I have always thought and spoken of you, Madam, I should hold myself in abhorrence, should I presume to criticise you. To speak the truth, I find great grounds of objection against the practice of sending young persons to the university; but I find, at the same time, that there may be greater, according to circumstances, against not doing it; and in this case, the choice is not of the greatest good, but of the smallest evil. Besides, the necessity of this step once granted, I am of the same opinion with yourself, that there is less danger in Holland, than any where else.

I am affected with what you mention to me, respecting the Counts Bentink. Judge for yourself, Madam, whether the goodwill of persons of their merit is precious to me; to me, whom

that even of persons that I do not esteem, always captivates. I know not what might have been made of me, by caressing me! Fortunately, no one has ever attempted to spoil me in this manner. They have laboured, without intermission, to give to my heart, and perhaps at the same time to my genius, a spring and stimulus of action, which they have not inherited from nature. I was born weak; ill treatment has rendered me strong. By dint of seeking to render me vile in my own eyes, they have rendered me proud.

You have the goodness, Madam, to wish to be informed of all particulars relating to myself. What shall I say? Nothing can be more uniform than my life; nothing more limited than my projects. I make the most of the present day, without taking thought for to-morrow; or rather, I contrive to prolong my existence more than I had made up my account for. I shall not make my exit from this stage sooner than nature shall please to ordain; but such procrastination does not fail to become irksome to me; for I have no longer any thing to transact here. A disgust for every thing consigns me every day more to indolence and inactivity. My physical ills alone put me a little on the alert. The spot which I inhabit, although sufficiently salubrious for others, is injurious to my state of health; this is the reason why, in order to avoid the ill effects of the air, and the importunities of the idle, I wander from one place to another, during the fine season. But when winter sets in, which in this part of the world is very severe and very long, I am obliged to remain

at home, and to suffer. I have a long time thought of changing my abode—but whither shall I go? how arrange matters? I labour, at one and the same time, under the inconvenience of indigence and wealth; every sort of care affrights me; the carriage of my rags and of my books over these mountains is painful and expensive. Is it worth my while to think of quitting my house, when I am in daily expectation of quitting my body? Whereas, by remaining where I am, I enjoy delicious days, wandering without care, without project, without occupation from wood to wood, and from rock to rock, always ruminating, but never thinking. I would give any thing in the world to be versed in botany; it is the genuine occupation of an ambulatory body, and an idle mind. I would not even promise that I should not be foolish enough to study it, if I knew where to begin. As to my situation, with respect to my resources, do not be the least uneasy on that head. I have as yet not been in want of the needful, and probably shall not want for a long time to come. Far from finding fault with your offers, Madam, I return you my thanks for them; but you must acknowledge, that these offers would be ill applied, were I to avail myself of them, before I really stand in need of them.

You asked for details; you ought to be satisfied. I am very satisfied with yours, with this one exception, that I have never been able to make out the name of the spot you inhabit. Perhaps I may be acquainted with it; in that case, how agreeable

it would be to me to bear you company, at least, in imagination. For the rest, I pity you that you have got no further than to philosophy. I am much further advanced than you are, Madam;—with the exception of my duty and my friends, I have come back to nothing.

I do not find the Chevalier so unreasonable, since he amuses you. If he were merely unreasonable, assuredly he would never be able to accomplish that. He is greatly to be pitied, when the paroxysms of the gout come upon him; for one suffers cruelly on these occasions; but he has at least the advantage over me of suffering without risk. No villains will assassinate him, no person has an interest in murdering him. Have you frequent opportunities, Madam, of seeing Madame la Maréchale? In her present melancholy situation she stands in need of all her friends, and especially of you. I am not less gratified with the assurance you give of the continuation of the kind offices of the Prince of Conti, than if I had not always confidently relied upon them. As the cruel trials through which I have passed, have left me the same as I was when he honoured me with his good opinion, I may hope never to merit a forfeiture of it.

I did not receive your letter, Madam, till after my return from a journey of three weeks: this has prevented me from answering it as promptly as I ought to have done.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Fontainebleau, 12th October, 1764.

Lord Beauchamp, who leaves us on Monday next, was mentioning to-day his great desire of being well recommended to M. Chauvelin, the French ambassador at Turin. Upon which I recollected your connexions with that minister; and as I knew your inclination to oblige every body, particularly Lord Beauchamp, (and shall I add, myself?) I easily yielded to his Lordship's solicitations, who desired me to procure a letter of recommendation, with which he should think himself so highly honoured. My Lord added, that he knew it was too great freedom for him to desire from the Countess de la Marche any letter to her Court; but if her Highness, on any occasion, would mention him as a person who had the honour to be known to her, he was sensible of the advantages that he might reap from it, and would be ever grateful for the favour.

My Lord desires me to accompany this application with some expressions of his great regard to you, and of his sincere acknowledgements for the many civilities which he had received from you during his stay in France. He seemed to regret, on this occasion, his own giddiness, which had not permitted him to cultivate sufficiently a friendship, on which he set so high a

value; and he promised himself great satisfaction on his return, by making himself amends for this negligence.

These regrets put me in mind of those expressed to me for the same cause by poor Tiepolo, the Venetian ambassador, whose death you have probably heard of. I thank Heaven, my conscience will always be clear from all remorse of this nature; both because I shall never, I hope, be obliged to leave the place where you dwell, and because I cannot reproach myself with a neglect of marking my sentiments towards you.

You see, my dear Madam, that while I am making application to you in favour of another, I would not entirely forget myself. I beg a share in your remembrance. Believe me (and surely you do believe me), that no one can bear you a more tender and more sincere friendship, or desire more earnestly a return of like sentiments on your part. This long absence convinces me more fully than ever before, that no society can make me compensation for the loss of yours, and that my attachment to you is not of a light or common nature.

P. S. Though this letter should not reach you in time, so as to allow your answer to reach this place, before My Lord's departure, be pleased still to write; because your letter can be sent after him. Be so good also to put the Chevalier Lorenzi in mind of his promise, to give My Lord's letters to his friends in Florence.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Fontainebleau, 31st October, 1764.

THIS late incident, which commonly is of such moment with your sex, seems so little to affect your situation either as to happiness or misery, that I might have spared you the trouble of receiving my compliments upon it: but being glad of taking any opportunity to express my most sincere wishes for your welfare, I would not neglect an occasion which custom has authorized.

Receive, then, with your usual, I cannot say, with your constant, goodness, the prayers of one of your most devoted friends and servants. I hope that every change of situation will turn out to your advantage. In vain would I assume somewhat of the dignity of anger, when you neglect me: I find that this wish still returns upon me with equal ardour.

I hear by M. Berlue, that you are to be in Paris on Saturday. I shall be there about that day se'nnight: I hope that your etiquette, which allows you to receive relations and particular friends, opens a wide-enough door for my admission.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Wednesday, 28th of November, 1764.

You may believe, that ever since my return to Paris, I have kept my eyes and ears open with regard to every thing that concerns your affair. I find it is the general opinion of all those who think themselves the best informed, that a resolution is taken in your favour, and that the resolution will probably have place. But you do not expect surely, that so great an event will pass without censure. It would ill become my friendship to flatter you on this head. The envy and jealousy of the world would alone account for a repugnance in many: no body has been more generally known than you, both of late and in your early youth. Will so numerous an acquaintance be pleased to see you pass, from being their equal, to be so much their superior? Will they bear your uniting the decisive elevation of rank to the elevation of genius, which they feel, and which they would in vain contest? Be assured, that she is really and sincerely your friend, who can willingly yield you so great advantages.

But though I hear some murmurs of this kind, I have likewise the consolation to meet with several who entertain opposite sentiments. I was told of a man of superior sense, no wise connected with you, who maintained in a public company,

that, if the report was true, nothing could give him a higher idea of the laudable and noble principles of your friend. The execution of his purpose, he said, could not only be justified, but seemed a justice due to you. The capital point is to interpose as few delays as possible. Time must create obstacles, and can remove none. While the matter seems in suspense, many will declare themselves with violence against you, and will render themselves irreconcilable enemies by such declarations. They might be the first to pay court to you, had no leisure been allowed them to display their envy and malignity.

On the whole, I am fully persuaded, from what I hear and see, that the matter will end as we wish. But in all cases, I foresee, that, let the event be what it will, you will reap from it much honour and much vexation. Alas! Dear Madam, the former is never a compensation for the latter: especially to you, whose delicate frame, already shaken by an incident, of much less importance surely, is ill calculated to bear such violent agitations. Pardon these sentiments, if you think them mean. They are dictated by my friendship for you. I am indeed so mean as to wish you alive and healthy and gay in any fortune. A fine consolation for us truly, to see the epithet of Princess inscribed on your grave, while we reflect that it contains what was the most amiable in the world? I propose to pay my respects to you the beginning of next week.

DAVID HUME TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

10th December, 1764.

It is needless to inform you how much you employed my thoughts in this great crisis of your fortune, of your health, of your life itself. You could perceive, by undoubted signs, that I partook sincerely of the violent anxieties, by which I found you agitated; and that, after having endeavoured in vain to appease the tumult of your passions, I was at last necessitated myself, to take part in your distress. My sympathy is not abated by absence. I find myself incapable almost of other occupation or amusement.

You still recur to my memory. The chief relief I have is in writing to you, and throwing together some thoughts, which occur to me, on your subject.

They are mostly the same which occurred in conversation, and which I have already suggested to you. They will acquire no additional authority at present in writing, except by convincing you, that they are the result of my most mature reflections.

Of all your friends, I, as a foreigner, am perhaps the least capable of giving you advice on so delicate a subject: I only challenge the preference, in the warmth of my affection and

esteem towards you; and I am, as a foreigner, the farther removed from all suspicion of separate interests and regards.

I cannot too often repeat, what I inculcated on you with great earnestness, that, even if your friend should fix his resolution on the side least favorable to you, you ought to receive his determination without the least resentment. You know that Princes, more than other men, are born slaves to prejudices, and that this tax is imposed on them, as a species of retaliation by the public. This prince in particular is in every view so eminent, that he owes some account of his conduct to Europe in general, to France, and to his family, the most illustrious in the world. It is expected, that men in his station shall not be actuated by private regards. It is expected, that with them friendship, affection, sympathy shall be absorbed in ambition, and in the desire of supporting their rank in the world; and if they fail in this duty they will meet with blame from a great part of the public. Can you be surprized, that a person covetous of honour, should be moved by these considerations? If he neglected them, would not your grateful heart suggest to you, that he had taken an extraordinary step in your favor? And can you with any grace complain, that an extraordinary event has not happened, merely because you wished for it, and found it desirable?

I am fully sensible, Madam, of the force of those arguments, which you urged, not to justify your resentment, of which you declared you would ever be exempted, but to maintain the rea-

sonableness of your expectations. I am fully sensible of the regard, the sacred regard, due to a long and sincere attachment, which passing from love to friendship, lost nothing of its warmth, and acquired only the additional merit of reason and constancy. This regard, I own, is really honourable and virtuous; and may safely be opposed to the maxims of an imaginary honour, which depending upon modes and prejudices, will always be regarded by great minds as a secondary consideration. I shall add, what your modesty would not allow you to surmise, or even perhaps to think, that an extraordinary step, taken in favour of extraordinary merit, will always justify itself; and will appear but an ordinary tribute. Allow me to do you this justice in your present melancholy situation. I know I am exempt from flattery; I believe I am exempt from partiality. The zeal and fervour which move me, are the effects, not the causes of my judgment.

But, my dear friend, the consideration, which is the most interesting, the most affecting, the most alarming, is the immediate danger of your health and life, from the violent situation into which fortune has now thrown you. You continued long to live, with tolerable tranquillity, though exposed to many vexations, in a state, little befitting your worth and merit; and you still comforted yourself by reflecting, that you could not change it, without withdrawing from a friendship dearer to you than life itself. You still could flatter yourself, that the person, for whose sake you made this sacrifice, if he had it in his power, would, at any price, repair your honour, and fortify his con-

nexions with you. The unexpected death of M. de Boufflers has put an end to these illusions. It has at once brought you within reach of honour and felicity: and has thrown a poison on your former state, by rendering it still less honourable than before.

You cannot say, Madam, that I do not feel, and with the most pungent sensation, the cruelty of your situation. I am sensible too, that time will scarcely bring any remedy to this evil.

The loss of a friend, of a dignity, of fortune, admits of consolation, if not from reason, at least from oblivion; and these sorrows are not eternal.

But while you maintain your present connexions, your hopes, still kept alive, will still enliven your natural desire of that state to which you aspire, and your disgust towards that state in which you will find yourself. I foresee that your lively passions continually agitated, will tear in pieces your tender frame: melancholy and a broken constitution may then prove your lot, and the remedy, which could now preserve your health and peace of mind, may come too late to restore them.

What advice, then, can I give you, in a situation so interesting? The measure which I recommend to you requires courage, but I dread, that nothing else will be able to prevent the conquences, so justly apprehended. It is in a word, that after employing every gentle art to prevent a rupture, you should gradually diminish your connexion with the Prince, should be

less assiduous in your visits, should make fewer and shorter journies to his country seats, and should betake yourself to a private, and sociable, and independent life at Paris. By this change in your plan of living, you cut off at once the expectations of that dignity, to which you aspire; you are no longer agitated with hopes and fears; your temper insensibly recovers its former tone; your health returns; your relish for a simple and private life gains ground every day, and you become sensible at last, that you have made a good exchange of tranquillity for grandeur. Even the dignity of your character, in the eyes of the world, recovers its lustre, while men see the just price you set upon your liberty, and that however the passions of youth may have seduced you, you will not now sacrifice all your time, where you are not deemed worthy of every honour.

And why should you think with reluctance on a private life at Paris? It is the situation, for which I thought you best fitted, ever since I had the happiness of your acquaintance. The inexpressible and delicate graces of your character and conversation, like the soft notes of a lute, are lost amid the tumult of company, in which I commonly saw you engaged. A more select society would know to set a juster value upon your merit. Men of sense, and taste, and letters, would accustom themselves to frequent your house. Every elegant society would court your company. And though all great alterations in the habits of living may at first appear disagreeable, the mind is soon reconciled to its new situation, especially, if more congenial and

natural to it. I should not dare to mention my own resolutions on this occasion, if I did not flatter myself, that your friendship gives them some small importance in your eyes. Being a foreigner, I dare less answer for my plans of life, which may lead me far from this country; but if I could dispose of my fate, nothing could be so much my choice as to live where I might cultivate your friendship. Your taste for travelling might also afford you a plausible pretence for putting this plan in execution: a journey to Italy would loosen your connexions here, and if it were delayed some time, I could with some probability expect to have the felicity of attending you thither.

DAVID HUME TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

SINCE I saw you last, I am become less apprehensive of your weakness than of your force. I see your health re-establishes itself every day, and hope it continues to do so. But I dread the vigour and vehemence of your resolutions. Remember your promise, that you are to embrace no new measure without at least informing me. I interest myself so much in your fortune, that you cannot think yourself fully entitled to dispose of what concerns me so intimately, altogether unknown to me. I must ingenuously confess to you, that, the

more I hear and reflect, the more I am inclined to justify your expectations and to give credit to your hopes. I have read a great part of Les Lettres de la Montagne. The book in my humble opinion will not do credit to M. Rousseau, though it might to another. I disapprove particularly of the seditious purpose of the last letters, which have succeeded but too well at Geneva: for the magistrates of that city, which the author had formerly celebrated with reason as one of the best governed in the world, are in mortal fear every hour of being massacred by the populace. There is the character of a lady, which many people have applied to you: but though the picture be like, I do not believe it was meant for you. If the book were not extremely scarce, I would endeavour to procure you a copy.

If you foresee at any time, that you are likely to be alone at Staure, I should certainly, if possible, wait on you, notwithstanding my resolution not to see you, till you should come nearer to us.

Saturday forenoon.

DAVID HUME TO THE MARCHIONESS DE BARBANTANE.

Paris, 1st July, 1765.

I DID indeed flatter myself, Dear Madam, that you would take some part in my good fortune. I thank

you for the assurances you have given me of it. They give me a sensible satisfaction, proportioned to the esteem and regard which I bear you. I have now got somewhat of a durable establishment in France; and shall have leisure to cultivate your friendship, with which, I hope, you will deign to favour me.

Have you heard of the share which Madame de Boufflers had in this event? As soon as she heard that there was a vacancy, by means of the promotion of Sir Charles Bunbury, my predecessor, she wrote to the Duke of Bedford, intreating him, in the most earnest terms, to befriend me in my pretensions, and setting all my claims in the most favourable light. The Duke answered her, that he would soon be in London; and if he had any credit or authority with the ministry, her friend should not fail of success. The Duke is not a man that ever promises in vain, nor is he a man that is ever to be refused; so that, from this interest alone, I was sure to have prevailed. But happily the same post brought intelligence to the ambassador, that the affair was already finished. But do you not think, that I owe the same obligations to our friend? or will you tell me, that I seek only a pretence for indulging my inclinations?

I am sorry to inform you, that our friend left this place, full of the same sentiments, which she expressed to me in the most lively terms; and though her journey and a new scene and new company may occasion some dissipation, I foresee that, on her return, she will take up the matter precisely where she left off, and may perhaps feel her disagreeable situation more sensibly

on account of the interval. I can hope for no event that will restore her peace of mind, except one, which is not likely to happen; and she herself is sensible of it. I have wrote in the terms, which the Prince desired; though I wonder he should expect a great effect from any thing that can be wrote or said by any body on that head. If he does not choose to apply the proper remedy, he need expect no cure. Those ideas have made such deep impression on her, that nothing can efface them; not even her own efforts, which, she assures me, she has employed to the utmost. I can readily believe her; if one could, at his wish, change his sentiments of things, I should have desired long ago, for the sake of my own tranquillity, not to have taken so sensible a part in her distress.

I shall be at Compiegne on Saturday next, and shall soon after take advantage of the permission you give me to pay my respects to you at Villers-Cotterets. I beg of you to make my compliments to Madame de Vierville; and I am, with the greatest regard,

Dear Madam,

Your most obedient, and most humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, TO THE MARCHIONESS DE BARBANTANE.

Compiegne, 19th of July, 1765.

I AM much afraid, dear Madam, that it will not be in my power to pay my respects to you at Villers-Cotterets this season. You have probably heard of our revolutions in England; that the Ambassador's brother is one Secretary of State, his nephew the other, and himself appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. He has not yet accepted of that employment, and wishes to decline it; but he is obliged to set out for London in two days, which leaves the functions of the embassy entirely upon me, and confines me to the Court. I regret very much my not seeing you on this occasion; and so much the more, because, if Lord Hertford goes to Ireland, I shall be obliged to accompany him, and may not afterwards have frequent opportunities of seeing you. I say this with much regret, dear Madam, on your account, on account of others of my friends, and on account of the country in general, whose amiable and sociable manners made me wish never to leave it. But all the ties of gratitude and friendship oblige me to attend the ambassador, who desires to carry me along with him; and that the sacrifice may not have too much merit in it, he makes it extremely my interest to return

with him: the office which he proposes to me, is very considerable for profit, and credit, and dignity. But I assure you I still wish that all those projects may fail, and that my lord and I may, both of us, remain in our present stations. I am glad to think that there is a possibility it may be so.

I had yesterday a letter from our friend in England, who is as melancholy and disconsolate as ever. She is even displeased that I had thrown a little gaiety into a letter which I wrote to her. I foresee that all the former disputes and vexations will return, never to have an end. Before her arrival in London, Lord Holderness wrote me a very reasonable letter, in which he promises to conform himself, as far as possible, to the views suggested to him; but he did not expect that she would give him an opportunity, by opening the subject with him. She leaves London the 25th of the month; so that I look for her at Compiegne in ten or twelve days. I beg my sincere compliments to Madame de Vierville.

I have the honour to be,

Dear Madam,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

London, 19th January, 1766.

My pupil and I, Dear Madam, arrived safely in this place, both of us in good health, and also in good humour, after the first melancholy of my separation from you was a little dissipated.

My companion is very amiable, always polite, gay often, commonly sociable. He does not know himself when he thinks he is made for entire solitude. I exhorted him on the road to write his memoirs. He told me, that he had already done it with an intention of publishing them.

At present, says he, it may be affirmed, that nobody knows me perfectly any more than himself; but I shall describe myself in such plain colours, that henceforth every one may boast that he knows himself and Jean Jaques Rousseau. I believe, that he intends seriously to draw his own picture in its true colours: but I believe at the same time that nobody knows himself less. For instance; even with regard to his health, a point in which few people can be mistaken, he is very fanciful. He imagines himself very infirm. He is one of the most robust men I have ever known. He passed ten hours in the night-time above deck during the most severe weather, when all the seamen were almost

frozen to death, and he caught no harm. He says that his infirmity always increases upon a journey, yet was it almost imperceptible on the road from Paris to London.

His wearing the Armenian dress is a pure whim, which, however, he is resolved never to abandon. He has an excellent warm heart; and, in conversation, kindles often to a degree of heat which looks like inspiration. I love him much, and hope that I have some share in his affections.

I find, that we shall have many ways of settling him to his satisfaction, and as he is learning the English very fast, he will afterwards be able to choose for himself. There is a gentleman, of the name of Townsend, a man of four or five thousand a year, who lives very privately, within fifteen miles of London, and is a great admirer of our philosopher, as is also his wife. He has desired him to live with him, and offers to take any board he pleases. M. Rousseau was much pleased with this proposal, and is inclined to accept of it. The only difficulty is, that he insists positively on his gouvernante's sitting at table, a proposal which is not to be made to Mr. and Mrs. Townsend.

This woman forms the chief incumbrance to his settlement. M. de Luze, our companion, says, that she passes for wicked, and quarrelsome, and tattling, and is thought to be the chief cause of his quitting Neufchatel. He himself owns her to be so dull, that she never knows in what year of the Lord she is, nor in what month of the year, nor in what day of the month or week; and that she can never learn the different value of the

pieces of money in any country. Yet she governs him as absolutely as a nurse does a child. In her absence his dog has acquired that ascendant. His affection for that creature is beyond all expression or conception.

I have as yet scarce seen any body except Mr. Conway and Lady Aylesbury. Both of them told me, they would visit Jean Jaques if I thought their company would not be disagreeable. I encouraged them to shew him that mark of distinction. Here I must also tell you of a good action which I did; not but that it is better to conceal our good actions. But I consider not my seeking your approbation as an effect of vanity: your suffrage is to me something like the satisfaction of my own conscience. While we were at Calais, I asked him whether, in case the King of England thought proper to gratify him with a pension, he would accept of it. I told him, that the case was widely different from that of the King of Prussia; and I endeavoured to point out to him the difference, particularly in this circumstance, that a gratuity from the King of England could never in the least endanger his independence. He replied: "But would it not be using ill the King of Prussia, to whom I have since been much obliged? However, on this head (added he), in case the offer be made me, I shall consult my father;" meaning Lord Mareschal. I told this story to General Conway, who seemed to embrace with zeal the notion of giving him a pension, as honourable both to the King and nation. I shall suggest the same idea to other

men in power whom I may meet with, and I do not despair of succeeding.

Permit me to finish by mentioning, in one word, my warm and indissoluble attachment to you, an attachment founded both on esteem and affection, not to mention gratitude. I speak not of my acknowledgements to the Prince of Conti, because I should never finish were I to enter on that subject.

Please remember me to Madame de Vierville and Madame de Barbantane: tell the latter that Rousseau says, no French author could have wrote in a more elegant style than the letter which he received from me at Strasburgh.

I write this the day after my arrival, so that I can give you no account of any of your friends, except Lady Hervey, who is well, and remembers you very kindly.

Please direct to me to the care of James Coutts, Esq. Banker, in the Strand.

P. S. Since I wrote the above, I have received your obliging letter, directed to Calais. M. Rousseau says, the letter of the King of Prussia is a forgery; and he suspects it to come from M. de Voltaire.

The project of Mr. Townsend, to my great mortification, has totally vanished, on account of Mademoiselle Le Vasseur. Send all his letters under my cover.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

12th of January, 1766.

I HAVE the satisfaction to tell you, that the project which I had formed for our friend's service, has succeeded. You remember the conversation between him and me at Calais, of which I gave you an account. I found means to have that conversation related to the King, by a friend of mine, who possesses much of his confidence. He was pleased with it; promised our philosopher a pension, without naming the sum; and there now wants only Lord Maréchal's consent to his accepting it. We have wrote to Berlin for that purpose; and I entertain no doubt of our obtaining it. You know that our Sovereign is extremely prudent and decent, and careful not to give offence. For which reason, he requires that this act of generosity may be an entire secret. As I am sensible it would give you great pleasure, and as I am well acquainted with your secrecy and discretion, I would not conceal it from you; allowing you to inform the Prince of Conti alone, who, I know, will take part in this success. I pretend also, that you are to like me a little better, on account of the share I have had in it.

Our friend is surprized he does not hear either from you or Mademoiselle Le Vasseur. I persuade him, that she is on the

road; otherwise you would have sent me by the post the letters which you mentioned to me. If any accident has happened, please to relieve his anxiety by a line or two. I should be glad to know how your inquiries at Rougemont's have turned out. It is only matter of mere curiosity. For, even if the fact should prove against him, which is very improbable, I should only regard it as one weakness more, and do not make my good opinion of him to depend on a single incident. I shall write, this post or next, to Madame De Barbantane; and as she is one of the numerous enthusiasts of our modern Socrates, I shall amuse her by an account of several particulars concerning him.

I suppose, that by this time you have learned it was Horace Walpole who wrote the Prussian letter you mentioned to me. It is a strange inclination we have to be wits, preferably to every thing else. He is a very worthy man; he esteems and even admires Rousseau; yet he could not forbear, for the sake of a very indifferent joke, the turning him into ridicule, and saying harsh things against him. I am a little angry with him; and I hear you are a great deal: but the matter ought to be treated only as a piece of levity.

'I find, that I might have spared myself the trouble of a journey to London, and that other foreign ministers, of a higher rank, have, without scruple, remained in the place of their mission. As I shall not get back so soon as I intended, I sometimes wish that I had taken this party.

The method of living is not near so agreeable in London as in

Paris. The best company are usually, and more so at present, in a flame of politics: the men of letters are few, and not very sociable: the women are not in general very conversible. Many a sigh escapes me for your sweet and amiable conversation: I paint you to myself all serenity, and cannot believe that ever I had the misfortune to displease you. I often steal an hour's chat with you: *Sic mihi contingat vivere, sicque mori.* As often as I see Lady Hervey, or Lord Tavistock, or the Holdernesse family, I have the satisfaction of hearing your name mentioned, which is some consolation in this land of banishment.

Adieu, my amiable friend!

P. S. Since I wrote the above, I have seen General Conway, who tells me that the King has spoke to him on the same subject, and that the sum intended is a hundred pounds a-year; a mighty accession to our friend's slender revenue.

A letter has also come to me open from Guy the bookseller, by which I learn that Mademoiselle sets out post, in company with a friend of mine; a young gentleman, very good-humoured, very agreeable, and very mad. He visited Rousseau in his mountains, who gave him a recommendation to Paoli, the King of Corsica; where this gentleman, whose name is Boswell, went last summer, in search of adventures. He has such a rage for literature, that I dread some event fatal to our friend's honour. You remember the story of Terentia, who was first married to

Cicero, then to Sallust, and at last, in her old age, married a young nobleman, who imagined that she must possess some secret, which would convey to him eloquence and genius.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Londres, le 18 *Janvier*, 1766.

Nous sommes arrivés ici, Madame, Lundi dernier, après un voyage sans accident. Je n'ai pu, comme je l'espérois, me transporter d'abord à la campagne. M. Hume a eu la bonté d'y venir hier faire une tournée avec moi, pour chercher un logement. Nous avons passé à Fulham, chez le jardinier auquel on avoit songé. Nous avons trouvé une maison très malpropre, où il n'a qu'une seule chambre à donner, laquelle a deux lits, dont l'un est maintenant occupé par un malade, et qu'il n'a pas même voulu nous montrer. Nous avons vu quelques autres endroits, sur lesquels nous ne sommes pas encore décidés ; mon désir ardent étant de m'éloigner davantage de Londres, et M. Hume pensant que cela ne se peut, sans savoir l'Anglois. Je ne puis mieux faire que de m'en rapporter entièrement à la direction d'un conducteur si zélé ; cependant je vous avoue, Madame, que je ne renoncerai pas facilement à la solitude dont je m'étois flatté, et où je comptois nourrir à mon

aise les précieux souvenirs des bontés de M. le Prince de Conti, et des vôtres.

M. Hume m'a dit qu'il couroit à Paris une prétendue lettre, que le Roi de Prusse m'a écrite. Le Roi de Prusse m'a honoré de sa protection la plus décidée, et des offres les plus obligeantes, mais il ne m'a jamais écrit. Comme toutes ces fabrications ne tarissent point, et ne tariront vraisemblablement pas sitôt, je désirerois ardemment qu'on voulût bien me les laisser ignorer, et que mes ennemis en fussent pour les tourmens qu'il leur plaît de se donner sur mon compte, sans me les faire partager dans ma retraite. Puissé-je ne plus rien savoir de ce qui se passe en terre ferme, hors ce qui intéresse les personnes qui me sont chères !

J'apprends, par une lettre de Neufchâtel, que Mademoiselle Le Vasseur est actuellement en route pour Paris. Peut-être au moment où vous recevrez cette lettre, Madame, sera-t-elle déjà chez Madame la Maréchale. Je prends la liberté de la recommander, de nouveau, à votre protection, et aux bons conseils de Miss Beckett. Je souhaite qu'elle vienne me joindre le plutôt qu'il lui sera possible. Elle s'adressera, à Calais, à M. *Morel Disque*, négociant, et, à Douvres, à M. *Minet*, maître des pacquebots, qui l'adressera à M. *Steward*, à Londres.

Je ne puis rien vous dire de ce pays, Madame, que vous ne sachiez mieux que moi. Il me paroît qu'on m'y voit avec plaisir, et cela m'y attache. Cependant j'aimerois mieux la Suisse que l'Angleterre, mais j'aime mieux les Anglois que les Suisses. Votre séjour chez cette nation, quoique court, lui a laissé des impres-

sions, qui m'en donnent de bien favorables sur son compte Tout le monde m'y parle de vous, même en songeant moins à moi qu'à soi. On s'y souvient de vos voyages, comme d'un bonheur pour l'Angleterre, et je suis sûr d'y trouver partout de la bienveillance, en me vantant de la vôtre. Cependant, comme tout ce qu'on dit ne vaut pas, à mon gré, ce que je sens, je voudrois de l'hôtel de St. Simon avoir été transporté dans la plus profonde solitude ; j'aurois été bien sûr de n'y jamais rester seul. Mon amour pour la retraite ne m'a pourtant fait encore accepter aucun des logemens, qu'on m'a offerts en campagne. Me voilà devenu difficile en hôte.

Lorsque vous voudrez bien, Madame, me faire dire un mot de vos nouvelles, soit directement, soit par M. Hume, permettez que je vous prie de m'en faire donner aussi sur la santé de Madame la Maréchale.

Après avoir écrit cette lettre, j'apprends que M. Hume a trouvé un seigneur du pays de Galles, qui dans un vieux monastère, où loge un de ses fermiers, lui fait offre pour moi d'un logement précisément tel que je le désire. Cette nouvelle, Madame, me comble de joie. Si dans cette contrée, si éloignée et sauvage, je puis passer en paix les derniers jours de ma vie, oublié des hommes, cet intervalle de repos me fera bientôt oublier toutes mes misères, et je serai redevable à M. Hume de tout le bonheur auquel je puisse encore aspirer.

(TRANSLATION.)

London, 18*th January*, 1766.

We arrived here, Madam, last Monday, after a voyage exempt from accident. I was not able, as I hoped, to remove immediately into the country. Mr. Hume has had the kindness to call upon me yesterday, and to take an excursion with me, in search of a lodging. We went to Fulham, to see the house of the gardener, who had been recommended to us. We found a house very much neglected, in which there was only a single room to let, containing two beds, one of which is at present occupied by a sick person, and which room he would not even show us. We have seen some other places, respecting which we are not as yet decided; it being my ardent wish to be at a greater distance from London, whilst Mr. Hume thinks that this cannot conveniently be, without my being master of the English language. I cannot do better than resign myself, in this respect, entirely to the guidance of so zealous a conductor; nevertheless I avow, Madam, that I shall not easily renounce the solitude with which I had flattered myself, and in which I hoped to nourish, at my ease, the remembrance of the kindnesses of the Prince of Conti, and of yours.

Mr. Hume has told me, that there is in circulation at Paris, a

letter pretended to be written to me by the King of Prussia. The King of Prussia has honoured me with his most decided protection, and with the most obliging offers; but he has never written to me. As all these fabrications do not cease, and probably will not cease to be propagated for a considerable time to come, I ardently wish that people would be kind enough to let me remain ignorant of them, and that my enemies were satisfied with the torments which they delight in giving themselves on my account, without causing me to participate of them in my retirement. Would to heaven that I might no longer be acquainted with what passes on the Continent, with the exception of what interests the persons who are dear to me!

I learn by a letter from Neufchatel, that Mademoiselle Le Vasseur is at present on the road to Paris. Perhaps at the moment that you receive this letter, Madam, she will already have arrived at the house of Madame la Maréchale. I take the liberty of recommending her again to your protection, and to the good counsels of Miss Beckett. I wish that she may rejoin me as soon as possible. She must address herself, at Calais, to *M. Morel Disque*, merchant, and, at Dover, to Mr. Minet, master of the packet-boats, who will direct her to Mr. Steward, in London.

I can tell you nothing concerning this country, Madam, with which you are not better acquainted than myself. The people appear to see me amongst them with pleasure, and this attaches

me to it. Nevertheless I should prefer Switzerland to England, but I prefer the English to the Swiss. Your residence among this people, though short, has made an impression upon them, which prepossesses me much in their favour. Every body here speaks to me of you, even less with a view of pleasing me than themselves. They still bear in mind your journies, as a happiness for England; and I am sure of meeting with kindness every where, in boasting of yours. Nevertheless, as all what is said of you is not, in my opinion, equivalent to what I feel, I should like to have been transported from the hotel of St. Simon, into the most profound solitude; I should have been certain never to be left alone. My love for retirement has not however caused me to accept, as yet, of any of the lodgings which have been offered me in the country. You see I am grown difficult with respect to my host.

Whenever you shall be pleased, Madam, to give me tidings of yourself, whether directly, or through Mr. Hume, permit me to intreat of you to inform me likewise of the state of health of Madame la Maréchale.

After having written this letter, I learn that Mr. Hume has found a gentleman, of Wales, who has made me an offer, through him, of a lodging, precisely such as I wish for, in an ancient monastery, occupied by one of his tenantry. This news, Madam, fills me with joy. If in this so distant and savage country, I can pass in peace the latter days of my life, forgotten

of men, this interval of repose will soon cause me to forget all the past misery, and I shall be indebted to Mr. Hume for all the happiness to which I may yet aspire.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Chiswick, le 6 Février, 1766.

J'ai changé d'habitation, Madame, depuis que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous écrire. M. De Luze, qui aura celui de vous remettre cette lettre, et qui m'est venu voir dans ma nouvelle habitation, pourra vous en rendre compte. Quelque agréable qu'elle soit, j'espère n'y demeurer que jusqu'après l'arrivée de Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, dont je n'ai aucune nouvelle, et dont je suis fort en peine, ayant calculé sur le jour de son départ, et sur l'empressement que je lui connois qu'elle devroit naturellement être arrivée. Lorsqu'elle le sera, et qu'elle aura pris le repos, dont surement elle aura grand besoin, nous partirons pour aller dans le pays de Galles, occuper le logement dont je vous ai parlé, Madame, dans ma précédente lettre. Je soupire incessamment après cet asile paisible, où l'on me promet le repos, et dont, si je le trouve, je ne sortirai jamais. Cependant M. Hume, plus difficile que moi sur mon bien-être, craint que je ne le trouve pas si loin de Londres. Depuis l'arrangement du pays de Galles, on lui a proposé d'autres habitations, qui lui paroissent

préférables,—entre autres une dans l'île de Wight, offerte par M. Stanley. L'île de Wight est plus à portée, dans un climat plus doux, et moins pluvieux que le pays de Galles, et le logement y sera probablement plus commode. Mais le pays est découvert, de grands vents, des montagnes pelées, peu d'arbres, beaucoup de monde, les vivres aussi chers qu'à Londres. Tout cela ne m'accommode point du tout. Le pays de Galles ressemble entièrement à la Suisse, excepté les habitans. Voilà précisément ce qu'il me faut. Si je me logeois pour mes amis, et que M. Hume restât à Londres, je serois bien tenté d'y rester aussi. Mais comme lui-même, en suivant ce principe, a choisi Paris, et que je ne puis pas l'y suivre, je suis réduit à me loger pour moi. En ce cas c'est en Galles qu'il faut que j'aille; car enfin, quoi qu'on puisse dire; personne ne connoît mieux que moi ce qui me convient. C'est beaucoup sans doute de trouver sur la terre un endroit, où l'on me laisse: mais si j'en trouve en même tems un, où je me plaise, n'est-ce pas encore plus? Si je vais dans l'île de Wight, j'en voudrai sortir; mais si je vais au pays de Galles, j'y voudrai mourir. Pensez-y, Madame, je vous en supplie. M. Hume m'a menacé de vous mettre dans son parti. Je vous avoue que je meurs d'envie de le gagner de vîtesse; et je sens que je ne serai jamais assez bien pour moi-même, si vous ne me trouvez bien aussi. J'en dirois presque autant à M. Hume, après tous les soins qu'il a pris et qu'il prend de moi. Je n'imagine pas comment, sans lui, j'aurois pu faire pour me tirer d'affaire ici.

(TRANSLATION.)

Chiswick, 6th February, 1766.

I HAVE changed my residence, Madam, since I had last the honour of writing to you. M. De Luze, who will deliver this letter into your hands, and who has been to see me in my new habitation, will be able to give you a description of it. But however agreeable it may be, I hope I shall not continue there any longer than till the arrival of Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, of whom I have no tidings, and on whose account I am very uneasy, as I calculated, from a knowledge of the day of her departure, and her characteristic eagerness, that she ought, in the natural course of things, to have already arrived. When this shall be the case, and after she shall have taken the repose of which she most assuredly will stand in great need, we will set out for Wales, to install ourselves in the lodging of which I spoke to you, Madam, in my preceding letter. I sigh incessantly after that peaceful asylum, in which I am promised repose, and which, if I find it there, I shall never leave. Nevertheless Mr. Hume, more anxious for my welfare than myself, is apprehensive that I shall not meet with it at such a distance from London. Since the arrangement respecting Wales, other places have been proposed to him for my residence, which to him appear prefer-

able—amongst others, one in the Isle of Wight, offered by Mr. Stanley. The Isle of Wight is nearer to the capital, the climate milder, and less rainy, than Wales, and the lodging will probably be more convenient. But the country is exposed; high winds, barren mountains, few trees, and provisions as dear as in London. All this will not suit me. Wales, on the other hand, perfectly resembles Switzerland, with the exception of the inhabitants. This is precisely what I want. If in choosing my residence, I consulted my friends, and if Mr. Hume remained in London, I should be strongly tempted to remain there likewise. But as he himself, in following this system, has selected Paris, and as I cannot follow him thither, I am forced to consult my own taste, in fixing on my abode. In this case, it is to Wales that I must go; for after all, whatever people may say, no person knows better than myself what suits me. It is doubtless a great happiness to find a place upon earth, where I may be tolerated; but if I find at the same time one which pleases me, is not this a still greater? If I go to the Isle of Wight, I shall wish to quit it again; but if I go to Wales, I shall wish to die there. Reflect on this, Madam, I conjure you. Mr. Hume has threatened me to gain you over to his side. I confess that I burn with desire to be before-hand with him; and I feel that I shall never be well off, unless you think me so. I could almost say as much to Mr. Hume, after all the care he has taken, and still takes of me.

I cannot conceive how, without his assistance, I could have managed to extricate myself from difficulties here.

DAVID HUME, TO THE MARCHIONESS DE BARBANTANE.

Lisle-street, Leicester-fields, 16th of Feb. 1766.

You have sometimes, dear Madam, been embarrassed between opposite opinions, with regard to the personal character of M. Rousseau: his enemies have sometimes made you doubt of his sincerity; and you have been pleased to ask my opinion on this head. After having lived so long with him, and seen him in a variety of lights, I am now better enabled to judge; and I declare to you, that I have never known a man more amiable and more virtuous than he appears to me: he is mild, gentle, modest, affectionate, disinterested; and, above all, endowed with a sensibility of heart in a supreme degree. Were I to seek for his faults, I should say, that they consisted in a little hasty impatience, which, as I am told, inclines him sometimes to say disobliging things to people that trouble him: he is also too delicate in the commerce of life: he is apt to entertain groundless suspicions of his best friends; and his lively imagination, working upon them, feigns chimeras, and pushes him to great extremes. I have seen no instances of this disposition; but I cannot otherwise account for the violent

animosities which have arisen between him and several men of merit, with whom he was once intimately connected; and some who love him much have told me, that it is difficult to live much with him, and preserve his friendship; but for my part, I think I could pass all my life in his company, without any danger of our quarrelling.

There is one circumstance, that renders him very amiable, and may serve to abate the envy arising from his superior parts; which is, that he is endowed with a singular simplicity of manners, and is, indeed, a perfect child in the ordinary occurrences of life. This quality, joined to his great sensibility of heart, makes him be easily governed by those who live with him; and his maid, in particular, has an uncontrouled authority over him. Shall I give you an instance? He showed me the letter which he had received from the Corsicans, in which he is invited to come among them, to frame them a body of laws, and to be the Solon or Lycurgus of this new commonwealth. He told me, that he had once intended to comply with this invitation, but, on consulting Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, he found she did not approve of the journey; upon which he laid aside all thoughts of it. His dog also has great influence with him; of which I shall give you an instance that may amuse you. Soon after our arrival, I prevailed on him to go to the play-house, and see Garrick. Mrs. Garrick gave him her box, which is much concealed from the audience, but opposite to that of the King and Queen; and their Majesties were privately informed, that

they might there expect to see M. Rousseau. When the hour came, he told me, that he had changed his resolution, and would not go: for—what shall I do with Sultan? That is the name of his dog. You must leave him behind, said I. But the first person, replied he, who opens the door, Sultan will run into the streets in search of me, and will be lost. You must then, said I, lock him up in your room, and put the key in your pocket. This was accordingly done: but as we went down stairs, the dog howled and made a noise; his master turned back, and said he had not resolution to leave him in that condition; but I caught him in my arms and told him, that Mrs. Garrick had dismissed another company in order to make room for him; that the King and Queen were expecting to see him; and without a better reason than Sultan's impatience, it would be ridiculous to disappoint them. Partly by these reasons and partly by force, I engaged him to proceed. The King and Queen looked more at him than at the players.

When I have proposed to him schemes for enriching him, he has told me, that he dreads the inconvenience of changing his manner of life; particularly, said he, I should be tempted, if I were richer, to take another servant, which, I know, is taking another master; and I should in that case have my will in nothing.

The public here has taken a great interest in M. Rousseau; and though we are now in the hottest time of our hottest factions, he is not forgot. Every circumstance, the most minute, that

concerns him, is put in the news-papers. Unfortunately, one day, he lost his dog: this incident was in the papers next morning. Soon after, I recovered Sultan very surprizingly: this intelligence was communicated to the public immediately, as a piece of good news. Hundreds of persons have offered me their assistance to settle him; you would think that all the purses and all the houses of England were open to him. Did he understand the language, he would live very happily in this country. He is particularly pleased that nobody makes him speeches or compliments.

What has chiefly begot a doubt of his sincerity, are his great singularities, which some people take for affectation, and an art to gain celebrity: but his greatest singularity is the love of solitude, which, in a man so well calculated for the entertainment of company, and seemingly so sociable, appears very extraordinary. I can however answer for his sincerity in this particular. He would not stay in London above a fortnight. I settled him in a village about six miles from it: he is impatient to remove from thence, though the place and the house are both very agreeable to him; and, of a great variety of schemes which I propose to him, the most solitary, the most remote, the most savage place is always that which he prefers. In a few weeks he will certainly remove to Wales, and will board with a substantial farmer, who inhabits a lonely house amid forests and rivulets, and rocks and mountains. I have endeavoured to throw a hundred obstacles in the way, but nothing can divert him; his obstinacy

is here an invincible proof of his sincerity. I must, however, confess, that I think he has an inclination to complain of his health, more than I imagine he has reason for: he is not insincere, but fanciful, in that particular. I know not how your enquiries with regard to M. Rougemont have turned out.

Please tell Madame De Boufflers that I received her letter the day after I wrote mine. Assure her that Horace Walpole's letter was not founded on any pleasantry of mine: the only pleasantry in that letter came from his own mouth, in my company, at Lord Ossory's table; which My Lord remembers very well. Tell her also that I like Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, upon acquaintance. She appears to me a good creature, more clever than she has been represented. She is only somewhat of a gossip, or what you call *une commère.*

Thus, dear Madam, I have wrote you a long letter concerning a third person; and have left myself neither room nor leisure to say any thing either of you or of myself. I must therefore be the more concise on that head. What can I say, but that I esteem and love you, and regret my being absent from you? I am more a stranger in this place than in Paris, and the manners are by no means so agreeable to me. There is a hardness in most characters, of which I now become more sensible than before. You have spoiled me for this country; and are obliged in conscience to be good to me when I shall return to you which I hope will be soon. Remember me to Madame De Vierville and Madame De Maury, and to M. De Puiségur, as well

as to M. De Barbantane. Embrace Madame De Boufflers in my name. I have only wrote to you and her since my arrival in London; which is a great crime I have been guilty or.

I have the honour to be, with great sincerity,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Lisle-street, Leicester Fields, April 3d, 1766.

It is impossible for me, dear Madam, to express the difficulty which I have to bear your absence, and the continual want which I feel of your society. I had accustomed myself, of a long time, to think of you as a friend from whom I was never to be separated during any considerable time; and I had flattered myself that we were peculiarly fitted to pass our lives in intimacy and cordiality with each other. Age and a natural equability of temper were in danger of reducing my heart to too great indifference about every thing: it was enlivened by the charms of your conversation, and the vivacity of your character. Your mind, more agitated both by unhappy circumstances in your situation and by your natural disposition, could repose itself in the more calm sympathy which you found with me. But behold! three months are elapsed since

I left you; and it is impossible for me to assign a time when I can hope to join you. Lord Hertford has wrote me, that he expects to quit Ireland in a few weeks, and that he hopes to find me in London. I know that he proposed to be in France this summer; and he may probably desire me to delay my journey, that we may go together. I still return to my wish, that I had never left Paris, and that I had kept out of the reach of all other duties, except that which was so sweet and agreeable to fulfill, the cultivating your friendship, and enjoying your society. Your obliging expressions revive this regret in the strongest degree; especially where you mention the wounds which, though skinned over, still fester at the bottom.

Oh, my dear friend, how I dread that it may still be long ere you reach a state of tranquillity, in a distress which so little admits of any remedy, and which the natural elevation of your character, instead of putting you above it, makes you feel with greater sensibility. I could only wish to administer the temporary consolation, which the presence of a friend never fails to afford.

The chief circumstance which hinders me from repenting of my journey, is the use I have been to poor Rousseau, the most singular, and often the most amiable man in the world.

I have now settled him in a manner entirely to my satisfaction, and to his own. There is one Mr. Davenport, a worthy man, a man of letters, and sense, and humanity, and of an ample fortune, about 6 or 7000 pounds a year, an elderly man,

and a widower. Among several country seats which belong to him, he has one in the county of Derby, situated amid rocks and mountains, and rivulets and forests, and surrounded with the most beautiful savage country in England. As he seldom lives there, he proposed to me to give an apartment to our friend; and as he has there a gardener and other servants, for whom he must keep a table, he told me that he could easily supply him with his diet, and all other conveniencies. I accepted of the offer, provided that he would take thirty pounds a year of board for M. Rousseau and Mademoiselle Le Vasseur. He laughed very heartily, but had the good-nature to agree to my proposal. It is a fortnight since poor Rousseau left me, and here is a paragraph of a letter he writes me. "Vous voyez déjà, mon cher patron, par la date de ma lettre, que je suis arrivé au lieu de ma destination; mais vous ne pouvez voir tous les charmes que j'y trouve; il faudroit connoître le lieu, et lire dans mon cœur. Vous y devez lire au moins les sentimens qui vous regardent, et que vous avez si bien mérités. Si je vis dans cet agréable asile aussi heureux que je l'espère, une des douceurs de ma vie sera de penser que je vous les dois. Faire un heureux, c'est mériter de l'être. Puissiez-vous trouver en vous-même, le prix de tout ce que vous avez fait pour moi."

I must however confess, that I have not the consolation to think he will long be happy there. Never was man, who so well deserves happiness, so little calculated by nature to attain it. The extreme sensibility of his character is one great cause;

but still more, the frequent and violent fits of spleen and discontent and impatience, to which, either from the constitution of his mind or body, he is so subject. These disqualify him for society, and are the chief reason why he so much affects solitude. When his health and good-humour return, his lively imagination gives him so much entertainment, that company, by disturbing his musing and meditation, is rather troublesome to him; so that, in either case, he is not framed for society. He is commonly however the best company in the world, when he will submit to live with men. Every one who saw him here, admires the simplicity of his manners, his natural unaffected politeness, the gaiety and finesse of his conversation. For my part, I never saw a man, and very few women, of a more agreeable commerce.

I shall tell you a very singular story of him, which proves his extreme sensibility and good heart. Mr. Davenport had thought of a contrivance to save him part of the expenses of his journey. He hired a chaise, and told him that it was a retour chaise, which would only cost a trifle. He succeeded at first; but M. Rousseau, the evening before his departure, began to entertain suspicions from some circumstances which had escaped Mr. Davenport's attention. He complained to me grievously of the trick, and said that, though he was poor, he chose rather to conform himself to his circumstances, than live like a beggar upon alms; and such pretended favours were real injuries. I replied, that I was ignorant of the matter, but should inform

myself of Mr. Davenport. No, cried he, no; if this be a contrivance, you are not ignorant of it: it has not been executed without your connivance and consent; but nothing could possibly be more disagreeable to me. Upon which he sate down in a very sullen humour; and all attempts which I could make, to revive the conversation and turn it on other subjects, were in vain. After near an hour, he rose up, and walked a little about the room. Judge of my surprize when, all of a sudden, he sat down upon my knee, threw his arms about my neck, kissed me with the greatest ardour, and bedewed all my face with tears! Ah, my dear friend, exclaimed he, is it possible you can ever forgive my folly? This ill humour is the return I make you for all the instances of your kindness towards me. But notwithstanding all my faults and follies, I have a heart worthy of your friendship, because it knows both to love and to esteem you.

I hope, dear Madam, that you have not so bad an opinion of me as not to think I was extremely affected with this scene. I confess that my tears flowed as plentifully as his; and that I embraced him with no less cordiality.

Please to tell this story to Madame la Maréchale de Luxembourg, to whom I desire that my sincere respects be presented. I also allow you to tell it to Madame De Barbantane, and to such of her female friends as you think worthy of it. I scarce know a male who would not think it childish. Ask Madame L'Espinasse, whether she can venture to tell it to D'Alembert. I own that I am ashamed to mention that lady's

name, as I have not yet answered the letter with which she honoured me. What do you think also of my ingratitude, when I tell you, that I have not yet wrote to Madame Géoffrin? I thank God, however, that I have not the impudence to desire you to make my apology, when I know that no apology can possibly be made. I am at a loss in what terms to express my acknowlegements to the Prince of Conti. Nothing can be more honourable as well as agreeable to me, than the offer which he is pleased to make me. I leave you to judge what addition the pleasure of living in your company must make to all the other inviting circumstances that attend it. But there is only one particular which we must weigh together, when we meet.

When I return to Paris, it will be necessary for me to lay a plan of life more conformable to my character and usual habits: I must resolve to pass a great part of my time among my books, and in retreat. How far will such a plan be consistent with the situation projected?

I forgot to tell you, that Lord Maréchal has given an answer such as I expected: but General Conway has been ill, so that we have not yet attained the warrant for the pension; though there is no doubt to be entertained of it.

I must add, that Davenport told me he intended to leave our friend, by will, the life-rent of the house in which he lives, if he finds that his attachment to it continues. You see, then, that in point of circumstances he is not to be pitied: for I have also

discovered, that he has some little resources beyond what he mentioned to the President Malesherbes and to me. It is one of his weaknesses, that he likes to complain. The truth is, he is unhappy, and he is better pleased to throw the reason on his health, and circumstances and misfortunes, than on his melancholy humour and disposition.

Please to make my compliments to Miss Becket: Lord Tavistock was so good as to execute her commission. I kiss your hands, with all the devotion possible.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Wootton, le 5 Avril, 1766.

Vous avez assurément, Madame, et vous aurez toute ma vie, le droit de me demander compte de mon J'attendois, pour remplir un devoir qui m'est si cher, qu'arrivé dans un lieu de repos j'eusse un moment à donner à mes plaisirs. Grace aux soins de M. Hume, ce moment est enfin venu, et je me hâte d'en profiter. J'ai, cependant, peu de chose à vous dire sur les détails que vous me demandez. Vivant dans un pays, dont j'ignore la langue, et toujours sous la conduite d'autrui, je n'ai guères qu'à suivre les directions qu'on me donne. D'ailleurs, loin du monde et de la capitale, ignorant tout ce qu'on y dit, et ne désirant pas l'apprendre, je sais ce qu'on veut

me dire, et rien de plus. Peu de gens sont moins instruits que moi de ce qui me regarde.

Les petits événemens de mon voyage ne méritent pas, Madame, de vous occuper. Durant la traversée de Calais à Douvres, qui se fit de nuit et dura douze heures, je fus moins malade que M. Hume; mais je fus mouillé et gélé, et j'ai plutôt senti la mer que je ne l'ai vue. J'ai été accueilli à Londres, j'ai eu beaucoup de visites, beaucoup d'offres de service, des habitations à choisir. J'en ai enfin choisi une dans cette province; je suis dans la maison d'un galant homme, dont M. Hume m'a dit beaucoup de bien, qui n'a été démenti par personne. Il a paru vouloir me mettre à mon aise; j'ignore encore ce qu'il en sera, mais ses attentions seules m'empêchent d'oublier que je suis dans la maison d'autrui.

Vous voulez, Madame, que je vous parle de la nation Anglaise. Il faudroit commencer par la connoître, et ce n'est pas l'affaire d'un jour. Trop bien instruit par l'expérience, je ne jugerai jamais légèrement, ni des nations, ni des hommes, même de ceux dont j'aurai à me plaindre, ou à me louer. D'ailleurs, je ne suis point à portée de connoître les Anglais, par eux-mêmes; je les connois par l'hospitalité qu'ils ont exercée envers moi, et qui dément la réputation qu'on leur donne. Il ne m'appartient pas de juger mes hôtes. On m'a trop bien appris cela en France, pour que je puisse l'oublier ici.

Je voudrois vous obéir en tout, Madame; mais, de grace, ne me parlez plus de faire des livres, ni même trop des gens qui en

font. Nous avons des livres de morale cent fois plus qu'il n'en faut, et nous n'en valons pas mieux. Vous craignez pour moi le désœuvrement, et l'ennui de la retraite. Vous vous trompez, Madame ; je ne suis jamais moins ennuyé ni moins oisif, que quand je suis seul. Il me reste, avec les amusemens de la Botanique, une occupation bien chère, et à laquelle j'aime chaque jour davantage à me livrer. J'ai ici un homme qui est de ma connoissance, et que j'ai grande envie de connoître mieux. La société que je vais lier avec lui m'empêchera d'en désirer aucune autre. Je l'estime assez pour ne pas craindre une intimité à laquelle il m'invite ; et comme il est aussi maltraité que moi, par les hommes, nous nous consolerons mutuellement de leurs outrages, en lisant dans le cœur de notre ami, qu'il ne les a pas mérités.

Vous dites qu'on me reproche des paradoxes. Eh, Madame, tant mieux. Soyez sure qu'on me reprocheroit moins des paradoxes, si l'on pouvoit me reprocher des erreurs. Quand on a prouvé que je pense autrement que le peuple, ne me voilà-t-il pas bien réfuté ? Un saint homme de moine, appelé Cachot, vient en revanche de faire un gros livre, pour prouver qu'il n'y a rien à moi dans les miens, et que je n'ai rien dit que d'après les autres. Je suis d'avis de laisser, pour toute réponse, aux prises avec Sa Révérence, ceux qui me reprochent, à si grands cris, de vouloir penser seul autrement que tout le monde.

J'ai eu de vous, Madame, une seule lettre ; aucune nouvelle de Madame la Maréchale, depuis l'arrivée de Mademoiselle

Le Vasseur, pas même par M. De la Roche. J'en suis très en peine, à cause de l'état incertain de sa santé. Les communications avec le continent me deviennent plus difficiles de jour en jour. Les lettres que j'écris n'arrivent pas; celles que je reçois ont été ouvertes. Dans un pays où, par l'ignorance de la langue, on est à la discrétion d'autrui, il faut être heureux dans le choix de ceux à qui l'on donne sa confiance, et, à juger par l'expérience, j'aurois tort de compter sur le bonheur. Il en est un, cependant, dont je suis extrêmement jaloux, et que je ne mériterai jamais de perdre. C'est la continuation des bontés de M. le Prince de Conti, qui a daigné m'en donner de si éclatantes marques; de la bienveillance de Madame la Maréchale, et de la vôtre, dont mon cœur sent si bien le prix. Madame, quelque sort qui m'attende encore, et dans quelque lieu que je vive, et que je meure, mes consolations seront bien douces, tant que je ne serai point oublié de vous.

(TRANSLATION.)

Wootton, 5th April, 1766.

You have assuredly, Madam, and you will have all my life, the right to demand an account of what I do. I awaited, to fulfill a duty so dear to me, till having arrived in a place of repose, I should have a moment to devote to my pleasures. Thanks to the attentions of Mr. Hume, this moment is

at length arrived, and I hasten to avail myself of it. I have notwithstanding very little to tell you, Madam, on the subject of the details which you require of me. Living in a country, the language of which I am unacquainted with, and always under the guidance of others, I have little more to do than to follow the directions which they give me. Besides, far removed from the world and from the capital, ignorant of what forms the topic of conversation there, and having no desire to be made acquainted with it, I only know what they think proper to tell me, and nothing more. Few persons are less instructed than myself in what concerns me.

The trifling incidents of my journey are unworthy, Madam, of your notice. During our passage from Calais to Dover, which took place in the night, and lasted twelve hours, I suffered less from sickness than Mr. Hume; but I was wet through, and frozen, and rather felt the effects of the sea, than saw it. I have experienced the kindest reception at London, have had many visits, many offers of service, and the choice of many habitations. I have at length fixed upon one in this province: I am in the house of a very worthy man, of whom Mr. Hume has spoken to me in terms of high commendation, and which has not been called in question by any person. It seems to have been his wish to place me perfectly at my ease; how this may eventually turn out, I know not; but were it not for his attentions, I should not know that I am in the house of another.

You wish me, Madam, to discourse with you of the English nation. I must commence by learning to know it, and this is not the work of a day. Too well schooled by experience, I shall never form a hasty judgment, either of nations, or of individuals; not even of those whom I have cause to complain of, or to commend. Besides, I have not yet had an opportunity of appreciating the English, from themselves; I know them by the hospitality which they have exercised towards me, and which forms a strong contrast to the character given of them. It does not become me to judge my hosts. I have been taught this lesson too well in France, to be able to forget it here.

It is my wish to obey you in every thing, Madam; but, for God's sake, do not talk to me any more about making books, nor even too much about those who do make them. We have books of morality a hundred-fold more than we want, and we are not a whit the better for them. You fear, on my account, the want of employment, and the *ennui* of retirement. You are mistaken, Madam; I am never less troubled with *ennui*, nor less inactive, than when I am alone. I have in reserve, independent of the amusements of botany, an occupation on which I set great store, and of which I become every day more enamoured. I have an acquaintance here, whom I burn with desire to know more thoroughly. The connexion which I propose to form with him, will prevent me from wishing for any other. I esteem him sufficiently, not to dread the intimacy to

which he invites me; and as he is as ill treated as myself by men, we shall mutually console ourselves under the injuries we have received, in reading in the heart of our friend, that they were unmerited.

You say, that I am accused of paradoxes. Ah! Madam, so much the better. Be persuaded, that I should not be accused of paradoxes, if people could reproach me with errors. When it is proved that I think differently from the multitude, do not they consider me as completely refuted? A holy monk, named Cachot, has, on the contrary, written a large book, to prove that there is nothing new in mine, and that I have only repeated what others had said before me. Instead of answering him, I shall leave His Reverence to battle it out with those who so vociferously accuse me of being ambitious of thinking differently from all the world.

I have received but one letter, Madam, from you: no tidings of Madame la Maréchale, since the arrival of Mademoiselle Le Vasseur, not even through M. De la Roche. This renders me very uneasy, on account of the precarious state of her health. All communication with the Continent becomes daily more difficult to me. The letters which I write, do not reach their destination; those which I receive, have been opened. In a country where, through ignorance of the language, a man is at the discretion of others, he ought to be fortunate in the choice of those in whom he reposes confidence; and if I may judge from experience, I have no right to reckon upon happiness. There

is one, however, of which I am extremely jealous, and which I shall never deserve to lose. This is the continuance of the kindness of the Prince of Conti, who has deigned to give me such signal proofs of it, of the good-will of Madame la Maréchale, and of yours, the value of which my heart so well appreciates. Madam, whatever may be my fate, and in whatever place I may live and die, most sweet will be my consolations, as long as I am not forgotten by you.

DAVID HUME, A M. * * * *

Lisle-street, Leicester-fields,
ce 2 de Mai, 1766.

J'AI besoin de bien d'apologies, Monsieur, auprès de vous, d'avoir tardé si long-tems de reconnoître l'honneur que vous m'avez fait; mais j'ai différé de vous répondre jusqu'au tems que notre ami seroit établi et auroit eu quelque expérience de sa situation. Il paroît être à présent dans la situation la plus heureuse, ayant égard à son caractère singulier, et il m'écrit qu'il en est parfaitement content. Il est à 50 lieues éloigné de Londres, dans la province de Derby, pays célèbre pour ses beautés naturelles et sauvages. M. Davenport, très honnête homme et très riche, lui donne une maison qu'il habite fort rarement lui-même; et comme il y entretient une table pour

ses domestiques, qui ont soin de la maison et des jardins, il ne lui est pas difficile d'accommoder notre ami et sa gouvernante de tout ce que des personnes si sobres et si modérées peuvent souhaiter. Il a la bonté de prendre 30 livres sterling par an de pension, car sans cela notre ami n'auroit mis le pied à la maison. S'il est possible qu'un homme peut vivre sans occupation, sans livres, sans société et sans sommeil, il ne quittera pas ce lieu sauvage et solitaire, où toutes les circonstances qu'il a jamais demandées semblent concourir pour le rendre heureux. Mais je crains la foiblesse et l'inquiétude naturelles à tout homme, surtout à un homme de son caractère. Je ne serois pas surpris qu'il quittât bientôt cette retraite; mais en ce cas là il sera obligé d'avouer qu'il n'a pas connu ses propres forces, et que l'homme n'est pas fait pour être seul. Au reste, il a été reçu parfaitement bien dans ce pays-ci. Tout le monde s'est empressé de lui montrer des politesses; et la curiosité publique lui étoit même à charge.

Madame De Boufflers vous a sans doute appris les bontés que le Roi d'Angleterre a eues pour lui. Le secret qu'on veut garder sur cette affaire est une circonstance bien agréable à notre ami. Il a un peu la foiblesse de vouloir se rendre intéressant en se plaignant de sa pauvreté et de sa mauvaise santé; mais j'ai découvert par hasard qu'il a quelques ressources d'argent, petites à la vérité, mais qu'il nous a cachées quand il nous a rendu compte de ses biens. Pour ce qui regarde sa santé, elle me

paroît plutôt robuste qu'infirme, à moins que vous ne vouliez compter les accès de mélancolie et de *spleen* auxquels il est sujet. C'est grand dommage : il est fort aimable par ses manières ; il est d'un cœur honnête et sensible ; mais ces accès l'éloignent de la société, le remplissent d'humeur, et donnent quelquefois à sa conduite un air de bizarrerie et de violence, qualités qui ne lui sont pas naturelles.

Je vous prie, mon cher Monsieur, de me garder une place dans votre souvenir. Je me flatte de profiter, l'été prochain, de l'amitié que vous avez la bonté de me marquer. Des accidens ont retardé jusqu'ici mon retour en France.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, &c.

(TRANSLATION.)

Lisle-street, Leicester-fields,
May the 2d, 1766.

I OWE you many apologies for having so long delayed to acknowledge the honour you have done me: but I deferred answering you till the time when our friend should be settled and have some experience of his situation. Considering his singular disposition he now appears most happily situated, and he informs me that he is perfectly satisfied. He is at the

distance of fifty leagues from London, in Derbyshire, which is famous for the natural and wild beauties of its scenery. Mr. Davenport, a very worthy man and of considerable property, gives him a house, which he seldom occupies himself, and as he there keeps a table for his domestics, who have the care of the buildings and gardens, he can easily accommodate our friend and his housekeeper with whatever persons so sober and moderate may wish for. He has the goodness to take 30*l.* sterling board a year; else our friend would not have set a foot in his house. If it be possible for a man to live without occupation, without books, without society, and without sleep, he will not quit that wild and solitary spot, where all the circumstances he has ever wished for seem to be combined to make him happy. But I fear the weakness and inquietude natural to every human being, and above all, to a man of his disposition. Indeed, I should not be surprised if he were soon to leave this retreat. But in that case, he would be obliged to confess that he did not know his own strength, and that man was not made to be alone. As for the rest, he has been perfectly well received in this country. Every one has been anxious to show him some politeness, and public curiosity has even been troublesome to him.

Madame De Boufflers has no doubt acquainted you with the gracious kindness which the King of England has had for him. The secret which is intended to be kept about it, is a circumstance highly gratifying to our friend. It is one of his little

weaknesses, to wish to interest by complaining of his poverty and the bad state of his health: but I discovered by chance that he has some pecuniary resources, inconsiderable, it is true, but which he concealed from us when he gave us an account of his property. As for his health, I think it rather vigorous than infirm, unless you chuse to take into the account the fits of melancholy and spleen to which he is subject. It is a great pity! He is very amiable in his manners; he has an honest and feeling heart; but these fits keep him aloof from society; they render him morose, and sometimes give to his conduct an appearance of whimsicality and rudeness to which he is a stranger.

I beg to bespeak a place in your remembrance. I flatter myself with the hope of profiting, next summer, by the friendship which you have the goodness to show me. Unforeseen accidents have hitherto delayed my return to France.

I have the honour to be, &c.

ROUSSEAU, AU GENERAL CONWAY.

A Wootton, ce 12 *Mai,* 1766.

MONSIEUR,

VIVEMENT touché des graces dont il plaît à Sa Majesté de m'honorer, et de vos bontés qui me les ont attirées, j'y trouve dès à présent ce bien précieux à mon cœur d'intéresser à mon sort le meilleur des Rois, et l'homme le plus digne d'être aimé de lui. Voilà, Monsieur, un avantage, dont je suis jaloux, et que je ne mériterai jamais de perdre. Mais il faut vous parler avec la franchise que vous aimez. Après tant de malheurs, je me croyois préparé à tous les événemens possibles. Il m'en arrive pourtant que je n'avois pas prévus, et qu'il n'est pas même permis à un honnête homme de prévoir. Ils m'en affectent d'autant plus cruellement; et le trouble où ils me jettent, m'ôte la liberté d'esprit nécessaire pour me bien conduire. Tout ce que me dit la raison dans un état aussi triste, est de suspendre mes résolutions sur toute affaire importante, telle qu'est pour moi celle dont il s'agit. Loin de me refuser aux bienfaits du Roi, par l'orgueil que l'on m'impute, je le mettrois à m'en glorifier; et tout ce que j'y vois de pénible est de ne pouvoir m'en honorer aux yeux du public, comme aux miens. Mais lorsque je les recevrai, je veux pouvoir me livrer tout entier aux sentimens

qu'ils m'inspirent, et n'avoir le cœur plein que des bontés de Sa Majesté, et des vôtres. Je ne crains pas que cette façon de penser les puisse altérer. Daignez donc, Monsieur, me les conserver pour des tems plus heureux. Vous connoîtrez alors que je n'ai différé de m'en prévaloir, que pour tâcher de m'en rendre plus digne.

Agréez, Monsieur, je vous supplie, mes très-humbles salutations, et mon respect.

(TRANSLATION.)

Wootton, 12*th May*, 1766.

SIR,

MOST sensibly affected with the favours with which His Majesty is pleased to honour me, and with your goodness, which has procured them for me, I already enjoy the happiness, so precious to my heart, of interesting in my destiny the best of Kings, and the man the most worthy to be beloved by his King. This is indeed an advantage, Sir, of which I am jealous, and which I shall never merit to lose. But I must speak to you with that frankness which you like. After such a series of misfortunes, I believed myself prepared for all possible contingencies. Yet have I met with one, which I had not foreseen, and which it is even not permitted to a virtuous man to foresee. The more

cruelly then do they affect me, and the trouble into which they plunge me, deprives me of the presence of mind necessary to conduct myself with propriety. All that reason counsels me, in so sorrowful a conjuncture, is to suspend my resolves on every affair of importance, such as is for me the one in question. So far from declining the benefits of the King, through the pride imputed to me, I should place it in making them my boast and glory; the only painful circumstance which I can see in it, is the want of ability to derive the same honour from them, in the eyes of the public, as in my own. But when I shall receive them, I wish to have it in my power to yield myself up entirely to the sentiments which they inspire, and to have my heart warmed solely with the goodness of His Majesty, and with yours. I am under no dread that this mode of thinking can effect any change in them. Deign then, Sir, to reserve them for me for happier times. You will then find that I have deferred availing myself of them, solely with the view of rendering myself more worthy of them.

Accept the homage, I beseech you, Sir, of my most humble greetings, and of my respect.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Lisle-street, Leicester-fields,
16th May, 1766.

NOTHING could have given me more pleasure than your letter. Though I never doubted of your friendship, every instance of it affords me new satisfaction; especially one which opens to me the prospect of passing most of my time in your company. I could not wish for a more happy situation, nor one more conformable to my inclination. The objections appear to me, at this distance, very light in comparison of the advantages. But I reserve the forming a full judgment till our next meeting, which, I hope, will be after your return from Pougues.

I have sent you Addison's Travels to Italy, by Mr. Ainslie, a young gentleman, who is known to Miss Becket, and who seems to be very agreeable. He would think himself much honoured by any notice you would please to take of him. He will also deliver to you six prints of Rousseau, done from an admirable portrait, which Ramsay drew for me. I desire you to accept one of these prints for yourself; to beg Madame de Luxembourg, in my name, to accept of another; Madame De Barbantane of a

third; Mademoiselle De l'Espinasse of a fourth; M. de Malesherbes of a fifth; and Madame de Montigny of a sixth. This lady lives in your neighbourhood, in the Rue des Vieilles Andriettes. All these are enthusiasts for our friend, and this trifle will give them satisfaction.

I am afraid, my dear Madam, that notwithstanding our friendship, and our enthusiasm for this philosopher, he has been guilty of an extravagance the most unaccountable and most blameable that is possible to be imagined. You know what steps I took, with his knowledge and consent, towards obtaining him a pension from the King, and the success I had met with. As soon as I got an answer from Lord Maréchal, approving the acceptance of the pension, I informed General Conway, whose bad health detained him in the country several weeks. When he came to town, he renewed his application to the King, who renewed his consent. The General informed me of this matter in a letter, where he expressed his satisfaction of being serviceable to a man of so much genius and merit; and he added, that, if he had known his direction, he would have wrote to himself. I sent immediately this letter to Rousseau. I waited yesterday on Mr. Conway, who put into my hands a letter of which the enclosed is a copy. He is so good-humoured as not to be angry; but begs me to use every expedient to overcome this objection. You see that our friend objects to the pension's being a secret; whereas, in his letter to Lord Maréchal, he said, that he liked it the better

on that account, as it was a testimony of esteem from his Majesty, without any mixture or suspicion of vanity, I shall write to him, and tell him that the affair is no longer an object of deliberation: he had already taken his resolution, when he allowed me to apply to the minister; and again, when he allowed the minister to apply to the King; and again, when he wrote to Lord Maréchal; and again, when he allowed me to notify Lord Maréchal's answer to the minister; and again, when he acquiesced two months in this determination; and that the King, General Conway, Lord Maréchal, and I, shall all have reason to complain of him. Was ever any thing in the world so unaccountable? For the purposes of life and conduct, and society, a little good sense is surely better than all this genius, and a little good humour than this extreme sensibility.

As to the deep calamity of which he complains, it is impossible for me to imagine it. I suppose it is some trifle, aggravated by his melancholy temper and lively fancy. I shall endeavour to learn from Mr. Davenport, who is just gone to that neighbourhood. Lady Aylesbury and General Conway believe, that it is Horace Walpole's letter which still torments him. That letter was put into our newspapers; which produced an answer, full of passion, and indeed of extravagance, complaining in the most tragical terms of the forgery, and lamenting that the impostor should find any abettors and partizans in England. Mr. Walpole has wrote a reply, full of vivacity and wit, but sacrifices it to his

humanity, and is resolved that no copy of it shall get abroad. He assures me that he, as well as Madame du Deffan, were entirely innocent of that publication at Paris: it was a lady, a friend of yours, who gave the first copy.

You have probably seen Voltaire's letter to our exotic philosopher. I fancy it will rouse him from his lethargy. These two gladiators are very well matched: it is like the combat of Dares and Entellus, in Virgil. The sprightliness and grace, and irony and pleasantry of the one, will be a good contrast to the force and vehemence of the other.

It is universally believed that the Duke of Richmond will not return to Paris. Lord Holdernesse, it was thought, would succeed him; which would be a great satisfaction to us all: but this report vanishes, and it is now believed that Lord Townshend will be our ambassador. He passes for a great wit, in our London style. I am not personally acquainted with him; but I am much mistaken, if his wit succeeds at Paris. He will be much surprized at first to find that he is no wit at all; but will discover at last that it is entirely your fault. He passes for a man of worth and honour.

You are happy that while your son shall be at Florence, he will have the company and protection of M. and Madame De Barbantane; but surely you and I shall much regret the want of the lady's company at Paris. Please to make my compliments to her and to Madame de Vierville. I have a project of accom-

panying you to Lyons. Would to God it were possible for us to take our flight thence into Italy; and from thence, if you would, into Greece. A friend of mine, who has been long settled in Smyrna, returns thither next spring, and urges me to take the journey along with him. What do you think of the project? The idea of it is not altogether extravagant. Might we not settle in some Greek island, and breathe the air of Homer, or Sappho, or Anacreon, in tranquillity and great opulence? And might we not carry thither our philosopher of Derby, who will surely prefer that sunny situation to the mountains and clouds of this northern climate? Perhaps Madame de Bussy might consent to be of the party. Please remember to me that lady's situation, which is not indifferent to me, both on her own account, and on account of the interest you take in it. I kiss your hands, with great regard and attachment.

P. S. Since I wrote the above, My Lady Hervey tells me, that she has been beforehand with me, in sending you a print. If you have one to spare, please send it to M. Turgot, who is an enthusiast of the same sect. Mademoiselle L'Espinasse could convey it.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Lisle-street, Leicester Fields, 15th July, 1766.

After an instance of your friendship, dear Madam, so charming, so agreeable to me, I should not have delayed a moment the making you the warmest acknowlegements; but before I have ended this letter, you will find me but too well justified in my long silence. I shall only say, therefore, that, if I can find fault with any thing, it is a circumstance which renders your method of proceeding the more obliging; I mean, your going too far and too hastily in your arrangements for me. How many accidents might have deprived me of all means of profiting by them! I have twice thought myself on the brink of returning to Paris, in the same station which I occupied before: and it was for this reason I told you, that this was a subject on which it were better for us to converse together, when I should have the happiness to see you. I now continue my narration with regard to Rousseau.

I left off by telling you, that I intended, by Mr. Conway's advice, to remonstrate with him on account of his bad usage of the King, of Lord Maréchal, of General Conway, and above all of me, whom he had allowed to solicit a pension merely that he might have the ostentatious glory of refusing it. But when I reflected further on the strange character and unaccountable

proceedings of the man, I thought that the pressing him so hard might with him be a sufficient ground of quarrel; and I therefore contented myself with remarking to him, that this circumstance of secrecy, to which he now seemed to object, was once most agreeable to him; that I hoped he would return to the same way of thinking, and that, if ever he did, he might inform Mr. Conway, who would endeavour to keep the matter still open for him. To this prudent and cautious letter I received no answer for three weeks, upon which I began to suspect that he was really ashamed to write to me; and being determined to take nothing amiss, and being desirous of consummating my good work, I went to General Conway, and persuaded him to engage the King to depart from the circumstance of secrecy, which seemed to give offence. He consented at my request to humour this whimsical man in his whimsies; only, said he, let us be sure beforehand, that he will accept of the pension in this form.

I immediately wrote to Rousseau to that purpose; and in four days, I received the following answer, dated at Wootton, the 23d of June.—"Je croyois, Monsieur, que mon silence, interprété par votre conscience, en disoit assez, mais puisqu'il entre dans vos vues de ne pas l'entendre, je parlerai. Vous vous êtes mal caché; je vous connois, et vous ne l'ignorez pas. Sans liaisons antérieures, sans querelles, sans démêlés, sans nous connoître autrement que par la réputation littéraire, vous vous empressez à m'offrir vos amis et vos soins: touché de votre générosité, je me jette entre vos bras; vous m'amenez en Angleterre, en ap-

parence pour m'y procurer un asile, et en effet pour m'y déshonorer. Vous vous appliquez à cette noble œuvre avec un zèle digne de votre cœur, et avec un succès digne de vos talens. Il n'en falloit pas tant pour réussir: vous vivez dans le monde, et moi dans la retraite, le public aime à être trompé, et vous êtes fait pour le tromper. Je connois pourtant un homme que vous ne tromperez pas; c'est vous-même. Vous savez avec quelle horreur mon cœur repoussa le premier soupçon de vos desseins. Je vous dis, en vous embrassant les yeux en larmes, que si vous n'étiez pas le meilleur des hommes, il faudroit que vous en fussiez le plus noir. En pensant à votre conduite secrette, vous direz quelquefois que vous n'êtes pas le meilleur des hommes, et je doute qu'avec cette idée vous en soyez jamais le plus heureux. Je laisse un libre cours aux manœuvres de vos amis, aux vôtres; et je vous abandonne avec peu de regrets ma réputation durant ma vie, bien sûr qu'un jour on nous rendra justice à tous deux. Quant aux bons offices en matière d'intérêt, avec lesquels vous vous masquez, je vous remercie et vous en dispense. Je me dois de n'avoir plus de commerce avec vous, et de n'accepter pas même à mon avantage, aucune affaire dont vous soyez le médiateur. Adieu, Monsieur; je vous souhaite le plus vrai bonheur: mais comme nous ne devons plus rien avoir à nous dire, voici la dernière lettre que vous recevrez de moi. J. J. R."—This letter needs no commentary; I only desire you to remark with what impudence and malice he has perverted that story which I formerly told you, and which I then thought to his advantage. I

mean the disgust about the hiring of his chaise. I immediately wrote him the following answer, dated 20th of June.

"Sir,—As I am conscious of having ever acted towards you the most friendly part, of having always given you the most tender, the most active proofs of sincere affection, you may judge of my extreme surprise on perusing your epistle: such violent accusations, confined altogether to generals, it is as impossible to answer, as it is impossible to comprehend them. But affairs cannot, must not remain on that footing. I shall charitably suppose, that some infamous calumniator has belied me to you: but in that case, it is your duty, and I am persuaded it will be your inclination, to give me an opportunity of detecting him, and of justifying myself, which can only be done by your mentioning the particulars of which I am accused. You say, that I myself know that I have been false to you; but I say it loudly, and will say it to the whole world, that I know the contrary, that I know my friendship towards you has been unbounded and uninterrupted, and that though instances of it have been very generally remarked both in France and England, the smallest part of it only has as yet come to the knowledge of the public. I demand that you will produce me the man who will assert the contrary; and above all I demand, that he will mention any one particular in which I have been wanting to you.

"You owe this to me, you owe it to yourself, you owe it to truth, and honour, and justice, and to every thing that can be deemed sacred among men. As an innocent man—I will not

say, as your friend; I will not say, as your benefactor; but I repeat it, as an innocent man,—I claim the privilege of proving my innocence, and of refuting any scandalous lie which may have been invented against me. Mr. Davenport, to whom I have sent a copy of your letter, and who will read this before he delivers it, I am confident will second my demand, and will tell you that nothing possibly can be more equitable. Happily, I have preserved the letter you wrote me after your arrival at Wootton; and you there express in the strongest terms, indeed in terms too strong, your satisfaction in my poor endeavours to serve you. The little epistolary intercourse, which afterwards passed between us, has been employed on my side to the most friendly purposes. Tell me, what has since given you offence. Tell me of what I am accused: tell me the man who accuses me. Even after you have fulfilled all these conditions to my satisfaction and to that of Mr. Davenport; you will have great difficulty to justify the employing such outrageous terms towards a man, with whom you have been so intimately connected, and whom on many occasions you ought to have treated with some regard and decency. I am, &c.

"D. H."

I shall now for your satisfaction transcribe to you his letter to me, wrote immediately on his arrival in the country: you will

see in what a friendly strain it is composed, and how lucky it is that I have kept it.

"*A Wootton, le 22 Mars*, 1766.

"Vous voyez déjà, mon cher patron, par la date de ma lettre, que je suis arrivé au lieu de ma destination. Mais vous ne pouvez voir tous les charmes que j'y trouve; il faudroit connoître le lieu, et lire dans mon cœur. Vous y devez lire au moins les sentimens qui vous regardent, et que vous avez si bien mérités. Si je vis dans cet agréable asile aussi heureux que je l'espère, une des douceurs de ma vie sera de penser que je vous les dois. Faire un heureux, c'est mériter de l'être. Puissiez-vous trouver en vous-même le prix de tout ce que vous avez fait pour moi. Seul, j'aurois pu trouver de l'hospitalité, peut-être; mais je ne l'aurois jamais aussi bien goûtée qu'en la tenant de votre amitié. Conservez-la moi toujours, mon cher patron; aimez-moi pour moi, qui vous dois tant; pour vous-même, aimez-moi pour le bien que vous m'avez fait. Je sens tout le prix de votre sincère amitié, je la désire ardemment, j'y veux répondre par toute la mienne, et je sens dans mon cœur de quoi vous convaincre un jour vous-même qu'elle n'est pas non plus sans quelque prix," &c. &c.

(TRANSLATION.)

"*Wootton, March 22d*, 1766.

"You will perceive from the date of this letter, my dear patron, that I am arrived at the place of my destination. But you cannot conceive how much I am delighted with it; you are not acquainted with the spot, and cannot read my heart. You should however know the sentiments which it feels for you, and to which you are so justly entitled. Should I live in this delightful asylum as happy as I hope, the thought that I owe them to you will be one of the pleasures of my life. He who procures the happiness of another, deserves to be happy. May you find in your own self the reward of all that you have done for me! I might perhaps have met with hospitality without your assistance; but never should I have enjoyed it so well as now that I owe it to your friendship. Continue this friendship to me, my dear patron; love me for my sake, for the sake of the great obligations I am under to you; love me for your own sake, for the sake of the kindnesses you have heaped upon me. I fully feel the value of your sincere friendship, I ardently wish for it, I will meet it with all my affections, and I think I have in my heart wherewith to convince you at a future time that my friendship too is not altogether without some value," &c. &c. &c.

The whole interval between this friendly letter and the other outrageous one was filled up by repeated and successful acts of friendship on my part. Though I have, from decency, supposed in my letters to him, that some calumniator had belied me, I know it could not be so, both because he receives no letters by the post, and because he could receive no letters from any part of the world which would not give him new proofs of my friendship towards him. What is worse, this is a deliberate and a cool plan to stab me; for here is the great distress which he mentioned to General Conway, and which neither you nor I could understand.

This distress and affliction was entirely a counterfeit and a lie; for Mr. Davenport wrote me at the very same instant, that he was very cheerful, and gay, and sociable, and enjoyed himself extremely, and was in no distress at all. But to return to my narration; Mr. Davenport delivered him my letter: he was in the utmost confusion; but upon that gentleman urging to him the absolute necessity of his giving me an answer, he promised to do it. He attempted also to tell him the story, but the only thing which he could understand was, that I lived in friendship with some philosophers at Paris who were his enemies. Several posts have since passed, and I have received no answer, nor do I indeed expect any. It is impossible that he can make me any apology for so black a proceeding. I should have wrote you of this matter sooner, had I not been desirous of sparing you the vexation of it till all was finished. You was besides absent from Paris. But as you may now be returned, and perhaps may

have heard some surmises of the story from other hands, I was willing to give you a perfect account of it.

I must now, my dear friend, apply to you for consolation and advice in this affair, which both distresses and perplexes me. Should I give the whole account to the public, as I am advised by several of my friends, particularly Lord Hertford and General Conway, I utterly ruin this unhappy man. Every one must turn their back on so false, so ungrateful, so malicious, and so dangerous a mortal. I know not indeed any place above ground where he could hide his shame; and such a situation must run him into madness and despair.

Notwithstanding his monstrous offences towards me, I cannot resolve to commit such a piece of cruelty even against a man who has but too long deceived a great part of mankind. But on the other hand, it is extremely dangerous for me to be entirely silent. He is at present composing a book, in which it is very likely he may fall on me with some atrocious lie. I know that he is writing his memoirs, in which I am sure to make a fine figure. Suppose that these memoirs are wrote, and are published after his death. My justification must lose a great part of its authenticity, both because several of the persons concerned may then be no more, and because every one may say, that it is easy to advance any thing against a dead man.

My present intention, therefore, is to write a narrative of the whole affair, and to insert all the letters and original papers: to draw this in the form of a letter to General Conway: to make

several copies of this narrative: to leave one in your hands, one with Lord Maréchal, one with General Conway, one with Mr. Davenport, and perhaps one or two with other persons: to send also a copy to Rousseau, and tell him in what hands the other copies are consigned; that if he can contradict any one fact, he may have it in his power. These copies then will lie safe, till he attack me in some way or other, and then, whether he be dead or alive, whether I be dead or alive, they will be published with all the authenticity, as if they had been committed to the press instantly. This is my present idea, which I hope you will approve of. But is it not very hard that I should be put to all this trouble, and undergo all this vexation, merely on account of my singular friendship and attention to this most atrocious *scélérat?* Was there ever another instance in human nature that obligations alone, without other pretences, became a ground of quarrel? Surely such diabolical pride was never seen in any other mortal.

You need not be surprized to hear rumours of this story flying about Paris. I told it to all my friends here, which I thought necessary for my own justification against so dangerous a man: and I wrote some hint of it to Baron De Holbach, whom I desired to examine Rougemont's books with his own eyes. I know not but the inserting that story may be to my purpose. You always forget to execute your intention on this head; or perhaps you have done it, but have concealed the issue from me, as not being willing to disgust me with my good

friend. I must beg of you to communicate this whole affair to the Prince of Conti, and desire his advice and orders for my conduct in it. If the Maréchale Luxembourg's health and spirits permit her to enter into it, I should not be displeased that she were acquainted with it.

I know that I shall have Madame De Barbantane's sympathy and compassion, if she be at Paris; and should be glad to have her opinion.

I have not yet wrote to Lord Maréchal; but must soon. I am glad you have taken my friend Smith under your protection: you will find him a man of true merit; though perhaps his sedentary recluse life may have hurt his air and appearance, as a man of the world.

MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS, A ROUSSEAU.

A Paris, ce 27 Juillet, 1766.

M. HUME m'a envoyé, Monsieur, la lettre outrageante que vous lui avez écrite. Je n'en vis jamais de semblable. Tous vos amis sont dans la consternation, et réduits au silence. Eh, que peut-on dire pour vous, Monsieur, après une lettre si peu digne de votre plume, qu'il vous est impossible de vous en justifier, quelque offensé que vous puissiez vous croire? Mais quelles sont donc ces injures dont vous vous

plaignez? Quel est le fondement de ces horribles reproches, que vous vous permettez? Ajoutez-vous foi si facilement aux trahisons? Votre esprit, par ses lumières; votre cœur, par sa droiture, ne devoient-ils pas vous garantir des soupçons odieux que vous avez conçus? Vous vous y livrez contre toute raison, vous qui eussiez dû vous refuser à l'évidence même, et démentir jusqu'au témoignage de vos sens. M. Hume un lâche! un traître! Grand Dieu! Mais quelle apparence qu'il ait vécu cinquante ans passés aimé, respecté, au milieu de ses compatriotes, sans être connu? Attendoit-il votre arrivée, pour lever le masque? pour ternir une vie glorieuse, plus qu'à moitié passée? Eh, pour quel intérêt? Ce ne peut être ni jalousie, ni rivalité. Vos génies sont différens, ainsi que vos langages, ainsi que les matières que vous avez traitées. Il n'envie pas non plus votre bonne fortune, puisque de ce côté il a toutes sortes d'avantages sur vous. Ce seroit donc seulement le plaisir de faire le mal, et de se déshonorer gratuitement, qui lui auroient inspiré les noirceurs dont vous l'accusez. Qui connut jamais de pareils scélérats? de pareils insensés? Ne sont-ce pas des êtres de raison? Je veux néanmoins supposer un moment, qu'il en existe. Je veux de plus supposer que M. Hume soit un de ces affreux prodiges. Vous n'êtes pas justifié pour cela, Monsieur. Vous l'avez cru trop tôt. Vous n'avez pas pris des mesures suffisantes, pour vous garantir de l'erreur. Vous avez en France des amis et des protecteurs. Vous n'en avez consulté aucun. Et quand bien même vous eussiez fait tout ce que vous avez

omis ; quand vous auriez acquis toutes les preuves imaginables de l'attentat le plus noir, vous eussiez dû modérer votre emportement contre un homme, qui vous a réellement servi. Les liens de l'amitié sont respectables, même après qu'ils sont rompus, et les seules apparences de ce sentiment le sont aussi. M. le Prince de Conti, Madame la Maréchale de Luxembourg et moi nous attendons impatiemment vos explications sur cette incompréhensible conduite. De grace, Monsieur, ne les différez pas. Que nous sachions au moins comment vous excuser, si l'on ne peut vous disculper entièrement. Le silence auquel nous sommes forcés, vous nuit plus que toute chose.

(TRANSLATION.)

Paris, 27th July, 1766.

MR. HUME has transmitted to me, Sir, the outrageous letter which you have written to him. I have never seen its parallel. All your friends are thunder-struck, and reduced to silence. Ah! what can one say in your behalf, Sir, after a letter so little worthy of your pen, that it is impossible for you to justify yourself, however much you may have believed yourself to be affronted? But what are then those injuries, of which you complain? What foundation have you for these horrible upbraidings, in which you indulge? Do you so easily

believe in treasons? Your good sense by its own light, your heart by its uprightness, ought they not to have guarantied you from the odious suspicions which you have conceived? You gave yourself up to them, contrary to all reason; you, upon whom it was incumbent to distrust even proof itself, and to reject even the evidence of your own senses. Mr. Hume a coward! a traitor! Great God! But what plausibility is there, that he should have lived upwards of fifty years, beloved, respected, in the midst of his countrymen, without being known? Did he await your arrival, to throw off the mask? to tarnish the lustre of a life, more than half spent? This can neither be jealousy, nor rivalry. Your geniuses are as dissimilar as your languages, as the subjects you have treated. As little can he be envious of your good fortune, since, in this respect, he has every kind of advantage over you. It must then be the mere pleasure of doing mischief, and of gratuitously dishonouring himself, which can have inspired him with the baseness of which you accuse him. Who has ever known villains of this description? madmen of this cast? Are they not imaginary? I am willing, nevertheless, to suppose for a moment, that such beings do exist. Nay more, I will suppose Mr. Hume to be one of these frightful prodigies. This will not justify you, Sir. You have believed it too hastily. You have not taken sufficient measures to guarantee yourself against error. You have in France friends and protectors. Not one of these have you consulted. And, had you even done all that which you have

omitted to do, had you even obtained every imaginable proof of the blackest outrage, you ought to have moderated your passion against a man, who has rendered you real services. The bands of friendship are entitled to respect, even after they are rent asunder, and the mere semblance of this sentiment is so likewise. The Prince of Conti, Madame la Maréchale de Luxembourg, and myself, we wait with impatience an explanation from you, relative to this incomprehensible conduct. For God's sake, Sir, do not delay this. Let us know, at least, how we may excuse, if we cannot entirely exculpate you. The silence to which we are compelled, operates more to your prejudice than any thing else.

MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS, A M. HUME.

QUELQUE raison que vous me puissiez dire, pour ne m'avoir pas instruite la première de l'étrange événement qui occupe à cette heure l'Angleterre et la France, je suis convaincue que par réflexion vous sentirez, si vous ne l'avez déjà senti, qu'il n'y en peut avoir de valable. Le chagrin que vous prétendez avoir voulu m'éviter, ne pouvoit être que retardé, et l'état d'incertitude où vous m'avez laissée, étoit plus pénible sans doute, que la pleine connoissance du fait. Concevez tous les motifs que j'avois de croire l'histoire fabuleuse; combien ma

surprise et mon ignorance, que j'exprimois naïvement dans mes lettres, contribuoient à la faire regarder comme telle par les personnes qui concluoient, ainsi que moi, que le Baron d'Olbach n'eut pas dû être votre premier confident. Enfin le déplaisir que vous m'avez causé par une conduite qui déroge un peu, ce me semble, à l'amitié que vous m'avez promise. En tout cela vous trouverez, je pense, de quoi contrebalancer les foibles motifs qui vous ont déterminé au silence avec moi. Persuadée que vous êtes incapable de vous refuser à l'évidence, ou de nier une vérité reconnue, je tiens ce point pour accordé, et je le conclus, en vous assurant que, si j'ai commencé par vous expliquer mes sentimens à cet égard, ce n'est pas que mon mécontentement soit considérable. C'est pour agir avec plus d'ingénuité, pour qu'on ne me soupçonne pas d'affecter de la modération:— enfin, pour traiter les choses dans l'ordre qu'il convient, en réservant le plus important pour le dernier.

Voici maintenant la question qui se présente. Avez-vous recommandé au Baron d'Olbach de taire ou de répandre les plaintes que vous faites du procédé de Rousseau? Le public, non encore instruit, les trouve amères, et juge que le Baron, en servant votre indignation dans sa première chaleur, vous a mal servi vous-même. Votre douceur, votre bonté, l'indulgence que vous avez naturellement, font attendre et désirer de vous des efforts de modération, qui passent le pouvoir des hommes ordinaires. Pourquoi se hâter de divulguer les premiers mouvemens d'un cœur grièvement blessé, que la

raison n'a pu encore dompter? Pourquoi vous dérober la plus noble vengeance qu'on puisse prendre d'un ennemi, d'un ingrat, ou plutôt d'un malheureux, que les passions et son humeur atrabilaire égare, (souffrez cet adoucissement) celle de l'accabler de votre supériorité, de l'éblouir par l'éclat de cette vertu même, qu'il veut méconnoître? Mais, venons au fond de l'affaire. La lettre de Rousseau est atroce; c'est le dernier excès de l'extravagance la plus complette: rien ne peut l'excuser, et c'est l'impossibilité d'effacer une telle faute, qui fera l'éternel tourment de sa vie. Ne croyez pas pourtant qu'il soit coupable d'artifice, ni de mensonge; qu'il soit un imposteur, ni un scélérat. Sa colère n'est pas fondée, mais elle est réelle, je n'en doute pas. Voici le sujet que j'en imagine. J'ai ouï dire, et on le lui aura peut-être mandé, qu'une des meilleures phrases de la lettre de M. Walpole étoit de vous; que vous aviez dit, en plaisantant, et parlant au nom du Roi de Prusse:—"*Si vous aimez les persécutions, je suis Roi, et je puis vous en procurer de toutes les espèces.*" Que depuis cela M. Walpole avoit employé cette phrase, disant qu'elle étoit de vous, pour ne pas s'approprier un bon mot, dont il n'étoit pas l'auteur. Si ce fait est vrai, et que Rousseau l'ait su; sensible, fougueux, mélancolique, orgueilleux même, comme on dit qu'il est, faut-il s'étonner qu'il soit devenu fol de douleur et de rage? Cette lettre si peu digne de son génie, qu'il adresse au gazetier Anglais, témoigne sa disposition, et en indique la cause. Tel est indubitablement le vrai principe de son déplorable égarement,

que j'ai deviné trop tard ; car de l'accuser, comme vous faites, de préméditation, de dessein formé de vous nuire, et de vous déshonorer, c'est ce qui n'est nullement vraisemblable. Tous les intérêts humains se réunissent pour l'en détourner. Estime-t-il la gloire, la réputation, étoit-ce un moyen d'acquérir ou de conserver l'un et l'autre, de se montrer ingrat? Il est sans appui, sans ressource, sans consolation quelconque, si vous l'abandonnez ; et vous imaginez que c'est de sang-froid, avec toute sa raison, qu'il s'expose à de pareils malheurs? Non ; il n'est pas possible. On assure que vous avez écrit qu'il vouloit se ranger du côté de l'Opposition. Je ne puis croire que vous avez eu cette idée. Rousseau dans l'Opposition ! Connoît-il les différens intérêts de l'Angleterre? Derbyshire, est-il un lieu propre à intriguer? Tirera-t-il plus d'avantage des Seigneurs du parti, qu'il n'en a pu tirer, s'il eut voulu, de votre amitié, de la protection de M. Conway, et des bontés du Roi? Mais c'en est trop là-dessus. Je le répète, je ne me persuaderai qu'à la dernière extrémité, qu'il ait formé un projet infâme et nuisible à lui-même, avec l'entier usage de sa raison. Mais cette raison une fois troublée par ses passions ardentes, il n'a pu s'en servir pour les commander. Il a oublié toute décence. Il a cru, contre toute apparence, ce qu'il ne devoit jamais penser, ce que la rectitude de son propre cœur auroit dû empêcher qu'il pensât jamais ; c'est qu'un homme connu, estimé comme vous l'êtes, dont la probité est confirmée par un long exercice, ait pu tromper tant d'années, ou changer en un instant. Quelques preuves

qu'on lui ait données contre vous, il a dû les rejetter, démentir ses yeux mêmes, et s'expliquer sur ses soupçons avec honte d'être assez foible pour les avoir conçus. Au reste, si ces plaintes ne sont fondées que sur la phrase qu'on vous attribue, on peut dire que son amour-propre est trop facile à blesser, puisque cette phrase est plutôt un satire contre le pouvoir arbitraire, que contre lui. Se laisser aller à cette violence, sur une simple raillerie; passer toute borne; oublier tout devoir, c'est un excès d'orgueil bien criminel. S'il vous a cru de moitié de toute la lettre, cela l'excuse un peu plus, mais non pas assez. Mais vous, au lieu de vous irriter contre un malheureux qui ne peut vous nuire, et qui se ruine entièrement lui-même, que n'avez-vous laissé agir cette pitié généreuse, dont vous êtes si susceptible? Vous eussiez évité un éclat qui scandalise, qui divise les esprits, qui flatte la malignité, qui amuse, aux dépens de tous deux, les gens oisifs et inconsidérés, qui fait faire des réflexions injurieuses, et renouvelle les clameurs contre les philosophes et la philosophie. J'ose croire que si vous eussiez été auprès de moi, lorsque cette cruelle offense vous a été faite, elle vous eût inspiré plus de compassion que de colère. Mais, dans l'état où sont les choses, il ne faut s'occuper du passé, qui est irrémédiable, qu'autant qu'il en est besoin pour régler votre conduite présente et future. Vous me demandez mon avis sur une question délicate, savoir, si vous devez instruire le public de cette aventure par un écrit, ou l'ensevelir dans l'oubli. C'est à quoi j'ai besoin de réfléchir. Je vais me reposer; mais, avant

de conclure cette première partie de ma lettre, je dois vous déclarer que c'est par le devoir que vous m'en imposez, et selon que l'amitié exige de moi, que je hasarde mon opinion, et que j'entreprends de vous dire ce que je ferois, mais non pas peut-être ce que vous devez faire ; car il est difficile de se mettre entièrement à la place d'autrui. Qu'en conséquence, soit que vous suiviez, soit que vous rejettiez mon avis, je serai contente, si vous l'êtes, et si le public vous approuve. Je n'ai pas la présomption de me croire la capacité qu'il faudroit pour bien conseiller un homme tel que vous, qui a sa gloire à soutenir, et sur lequel tous les yeux vont se fixer. Votre prévention en ma faveur ne peut aller jusqu'à me la supposer : vous faites bien néanmoins, dans la crise où vous êtes, de ne négliger aucune précaution, d'écouter tous les avis. Le mien, en particulier, sans être décisif, ne peut être méprisable ; et les sentimens qui le dicteront, doivent sans doute lui donner quelque poids.

Ce 25, à Paris.

Ma lettre a été interrompue trois jours, pendant lesquels j'ai fait soixante-quatre lieues. En arrivant à Paris, j'ai trouvé la vôtre à M. D'Alembert, qui l'avoit envoyée chez moi, pour que je la lusse. J'avoue qu'elle m'a surprise et affligée au dernier point. Quoi! vous lui recommandez de la communiquer, non-seulement à vos amis de Paris, (dénomination bien vague et bien étendue) mais à M. De Voltaire, avec qui vous avez peu de liaison, et dont vous connoissez si bien les dispositions ! Après

ce trait de passion, après tout ce que vous avez dit et écrit, les réflexions que je vous communiquerois, les conseils que je pourrois vous donner, seroient inutiles. Vous êtes trop confirmé dans votre opinion, trop engagé, trop soutenu dans votre colère, pour m'écouter. Peu s'en faut, que je ne brûle ce que j'ai déjà écrit. Au reste, vous aurez ici un parti nombreux, composé de tous ceux qui seront charmés de vous voir agir comme un homme ordinaire. Ce n'est pas un médiocre avantage pour ceux, qui ne pouvoient atteindre jusqu'à votre hauteur, de vous rapprocher, tant soit peu, de la leur. Pour moi, je suis pénétrée de cet événement. Je n'ai pas la force d'écrire rien de plus sur ce triste sujet, et je n'ajouterai que quelques lignes, parce que ma conscience et mon amitié m'y obligent. Si les choses sont telles que je me les figure, le trouble de Rousseau, en écoutant M. Davenport, et en lisant votre lettre, n'est point la conviction d'une noirceur méditée. Il naît d'un trait de lumière, qui lui aura fait entrevoir l'abîme, où son fol orgueil l'a précipité. Il aura commencé à douter de la réalité de ses griefs ; il en aura été accablé. Nous verrons quel effort il fera, pour se tirer de ce mauvais pas.

Autre article auquel je dois répondre. M. le Prince de Conti, à qui je n'ai pas montré votre lettre, parce qu'il est absent depuis six jours, s'étoit chargé de l'information chez M. De Rougemont. Il l'a différé d'un jour à l'autre ; ensuite il a passé lui-même chez ce banquier, qui s'est trouvé sorti. Le banquier, voyant un tel nom, auroit dû venir sur-le-champ demander quels ordres on avoit à lui donner ; il n'en a rien fait : bref,

tantôt par une raison, tantôt par une autre, ce que nous voulions savoir n'a pas été su. Vous ne me connoissez point, quand vous imaginez que je puisse vous avoir caché le résultat des recherches que nous faisions de concert. Mais, que prétendez-vous faire des nouvelles informations dont vous chargez M. D'Olbach? Vous n'avez pas dessein apparemment de rien écrire contre ce malheureux homme, qui soit étranger à votre cause. Vous ne serez pas son délateur, après avoir été son protecteur. De semblables examens doivent précéder les liaisons, et non suivre les ruptures. Au nom de ce que vous vous devez ; au nom d'une amitié dont l'estime fut la base, prenez garde à ce que vous allez faire. Que craindriez-vous? Ni Rousseau, ni personne ne peut vous nuire. Vous êtes invulnérable, si vous ne vous blessez pas vous-même.

J'ai fait prier votre ami, M. Smith, de venir chez moi. Il me quitte à l'instant. Je lui ai lu ma lettre. Il appréhende, aussi bien que moi, que vous ne soyez trompé dans la chaleur d'un si juste ressentiment. Il vous prie de relire la lettre de Rousseau à M. Conway. Il ne nous paroît pas qu'il refuse la pension, ni qu'il désire qu'elle soit publique. Il demande qu'elle soit différée, jusqu'à ce que la tranquillité de son âme, altérée par un violent chagrin, soit rétablie, et qu'il puisse se livrer tout entier à sa reconnoissance. Dans la mauvaise humeur où il étoit, votre méprise, qu'il aura cru volontaire, aura achevé de l'aigrir, et de lui renverser la raison.

(TRANSLATION.)

THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS, TO MR. HUME.

WHATEVER reason you may alledge, for not having informed me, before any other person, of the strange event which at this moment engrosses the attention of England and France, I am convinced that, on reflexion, you will be sensible, if you are not so already, that you can produce none of any weight. The vexation, which you pretend to have been desirous of sparing me, could only be delayed, and the state of incertitude in which you have left me was more painful, beyond doubt, than would have been the complete knowledge of the fact. Picture to yourself all the motives which I had for believing the story to be fabulous; how much my surprize and my ignorance, which I expressed without disguise in my letters, contributed to cause it to be regarded in this light by the persons, who concluded, as I did, that Baron d'Olbach ought not to have been your first confident; lastly, the displeasure which you have occasioned me by a line of conduct, which trenches a little, as it appears to me, on the friendship which you had promised me. In all this you will find, I think, sufficient to counterbalance the feeble motives which have determined you to be silent on this point with me. Persuaded

as I am, that you are incapable of not yielding to evidence, or denying an established truth, I hold this point as granted; and I finish by assuring you that, if I have commenced by an explanation of my sentiments on this business, it is not that my anger is very considerable. It is from a wish to act with more ingenuousness; that I may not be suspected merely to affect moderation; and, finally, to treat things in their due order, by reserving the most important for the last.

The question which presents itself for consideration, is this. Have you recommended to Baron d'Olbach to observe silence, or to propagate the complaints which you make of the conduct of Rousseau? The public, not yet adequately informed on this point, finds them bitter, and conceives that the Baron, in abetting your indignation in its first warmth, has rendered you a bad service. Your gentleness, your goodness, your natural indulgence, intitle us to expect from you efforts of moderation, greater than from ordinary men. Why be so precipitate to give publicity to the first ebullitions of a heart grievously wounded, which reason has not yet been able to controul? Why deprive yourself of the noblest revenge which it is possible to take of an enemy, of an ungrateful, or rather of an unfortunate man, whom his passion and his bilious temper have bewildered (allow me to soften down his offence)—to wit, that of overwhelming him with your superiority, of dazzling him with the lustre of that very virtue, which he wilfully misconceives? But, let us sift this business to the

bottom. The letter of Rousseau is atrocious; it is the last excess of the most complete extravagance: nothing can extenuate it; and it is the impossibility of obliterating his fault which will constitute the eternal torment of his life. Do not, however, believe that he is capable of artifice, or of falsehood; that he is either an impostor, or a villain. His anger is unfounded; but it is real, I have no doubt of it. The following is what I imagine to be the subject of it. I have heard it said, and perhaps it has been stated to him, that one of the best phrases in Mr. Walpole's letter belongs to you; that you had said by way of bantering, and speaking in the name of the King of Prussia: "*If you are in love with persecutions, I am King, and I can procure you some of all sorts.*" That in the sequel Mr. Walpole had made use of this phrase, saying that it belonged to you, in order not to appropriate to himself a *bon mot* of which he is not the author. If this statement be founded in fact, and if Mr. Rousseau has been informed of it; irritable, fiery, melancholy, and even proud, as he is said to be, can it be matter of astonishment, that he should grow mad with vexation and rage? That letter, so little worthy of his genius, which he addresses to the English Journalist, bears at once testimony to his disposition, and points out its cause. Such is indubitably the true principle of his deplorable alienation, which I have found out too late; for, to accuse him, as you do, of premeditation, of a preconcerted design to injure you, and to dishonour you, is a charge in no wise probable. Every human interest

conspires to dissuade him from it. If he values glory and reputation, was ingratitude the way to acquire or preserve either? He is without support, without resource, without any consolation whatever, if you abandon him; and you imagine that it is in cool blood, and with the unwarped use of his reason, that he exposes himself to similar misfortunes. No; it is not possible. It is asserted, that you have written, that he wished to range himself on the side of the Opposition. I cannot believe that you ever harboured such an idea. Rousseau in the Opposition! Is he acquainted with the different interests of England? Is Derbyshire a fit place for carrying on political intrigue? Will he derive greater advantage from the gentlemen of the Opposition party, than he might have derived, if he had been willing, from your friendship, from the protection of Mr. Conway, and from the bounty of the King? But too much has been already said on this subject. I repeat it, I never will persuade myself, but in the very last extremity, that he can have formed a project, infamous and prejudicial to himself, with the entire use of his reason. But his reason, once troubled by his ardent passions, is no longer able to govern them. He has lost sight of all decorum. He has believed, contrary to all appearance, what he ought never to think; what the rectitude of his own heart ought to have prevented him from ever thinking; namely, that a man, known and esteemed as you are, whose probity is of long standing, should be able to carry on the deception for such a number of years, or else to change in an instant. Whatever proofs may have been given him against you, he ought to have

rejected them, to have disbelieved even the evidence of his own eyes, and come to an explanation relative to his suspicions, with shame for being sufficiently weak to have harboured them. And if his complaints have no other foundation than the phrase, which has been attributed to you, one may say, that his self-love is too susceptible of being wounded, inasmuch as this phrase is rather a satire on arbitrary power, than on him. To suffer oneself to proceed to such violence, for a mere jest; to transgress all bounds, to lose sight of every duty, argues a most criminal excess of pride. If he has believed you to be implicated in the whole of the letter, this would excuse him somewhat more, but not sufficiently. But you, instead of being incensed against an unfortunate man, who has not the power to injure you, whilst he entirely ruins himself, why have you not given scope to that generous pity of which you are so capable? You would thus have avoided a rupture, which supplies food for scandal, which distracts public opinion, which flatters malignity, which furnishes amusement, at the expense of both parties, to the idle and the inconsiderate; which gives birth to injurious reflexions, and renews the clamours against philosophers and philosophy itself. I am bold to believe, that if you had been seated by my side, when this cruel offence was offered to you, it would have inspired you more with compassion than with anger. But in the present state of things, we must not occupy ourselves with the past, which is now irremediable, any further than may be necessary for the regulation of your present and future con-

duct. You request my advice on a delicate question; to wit, whether you ought to put the public in possession of this adventure, by a written document, or bury it in oblivion. This is a point, on which I have need of reflexion. I am going to repose myself; but before I conclude this first part of my letter, I ought to declare to you, that it is in performance of the duty which you impose upon me, and in deference to the call of friendship, that I hazard my opinion, and that I undertake to tell you what I should do, but not, perhaps, what it behoves you to do. In consequence, whether you follow, or whether you reject my counsel, I shall be content, provided you are so, and the public approve of your conduct. I have not the presumption to believe myself endowed with the capacity which is necessary to give good advice to a man, like yourself, who has his glory to uphold, and on whom all eyes will be turned. Your prepossession in my favour cannot extend so far as to suppose me qualified for this; you nevertheless do well, in the critical predicament in which you stand, to neglect no measures of precaution, to lend an ear to every advice. Mine, in particular, without being decisive, cannot be contemptible; and the sentiments which will dictate it, ought undoubtedly to give it some weight.

Paris, 25th.

My letter has been interrupted for three days, during which interval I have made a journey of sixty-four leagues. On my arrival at Paris, I found your letter to M. D'Alem-

bert, which he had sent to my house for my perusal. I confess that it has surprized and afflicted me to the last degree. What! you recommend to him to communicate it, not only to your friends at Paris (a definition at once very vague and very extensive), but to M. De Voltaire, with whom you have very slight connexions, and with whose principles you are so well acquainted! After this burst of passion; after all you have said and written, the reflexions which I might communicate to you, the counsel which I might be able to give, would be of no avail. You are too confirmed in your own opinion, too much engaged, too much supported in your anger, to listen to me. In fact, I am almost tempted to burn what I have already written. For the rest, you will have here a numerous party, composed of all those who will be charmed to see you act like an ordinary man. It is no small advantage for those, who were not able to attain to your elevation, to lower you, be it ever so little, to the level of theirs. For my part, I am deeply affected with this event. I have not sufficient strength to write any more on this sorrowful subject; and shall only add a few lines, because my conscience and my friendship compel me so to do. If the affair be such as I represent it to myself, the uneasiness manifested by Rousseau, on hearing Mr. Davenport, and on reading your letter, is not the conviction of premeditated baseness. It emanates from a ray of light, which has afforded him a glimpse of the abyss, into which his mad pride has precipitated him. He will have commenced to doubt of the reality of his wrongs—he will be

overwhelmed with his error. We shall see, what steps he will take to extricate himself from this aukward dilemma.

There is one article more, to which I ought to reply. The Prince of Conti, to whom I have not shown your letter, because he has been absent for these six days, had taken upon himself the charge of obtaining information at M. de Rougemonts. This he has deferred doing from one day to the other; subsequently he waited himself upon this Banker; but he was not at home. The Banker, on seeing such a name on his list, ought immediately to have come and requested to know, what orders the Prince had to give him: he has done nothing of the kind. In a word, sometimes for one reason, sometimes for another, that which we wanted to know, has not been known. You mistake my character, when you suppose that I could have concealed from you the result of our conjoint researches. But, what use do you intend to make of the new enquiries, with which you have charged M. D'Olbach? You have not apparently the design of writing any thing against this unfortunate man, which may be foreign to your cause. You will not become his denunciator, after having been his protector. Such enquiries ought to precede the formation of connexions, and not to follow their rupture. In the name of what you owe to yourself, in the name of a friendship, of which esteem was the basis, be careful what you do. What is it you dread? Neither Rousseau nor any other person can injure you. You are invulnerable, if you do not wound yourself.

I have intreated your friend, Mr. Smith, to call upon me. He has just this moment left me. I have read my letter to him. He, like myself, is apprehensive that you have been deceived, in the warmth of so just a resentment. He begs of you to re-peruse the letter of Rousseau to Mr. Conway. It does not appear to us, that he refuses the pension, nor that he desires that it should be made public. He begs that it may be deferred till the tranquillity of his soul, disturbed by violent sorrow, shall be re-established, and till he shall be able to yield himself up entirely to his gratitude. In the ill temper in which he was, your mistake, by him supposed to be voluntary, must have put the finishing stroke to his misfortunes, by souring his mind, and completely upsetting his reason.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Lisle Street, Leicester Fields, 12th Aug. 1766.

NOTHING could more rejoice me than the sight of your hand-writing after such long silence. My pleasure was not diminished by the contents of your letter: for though you reprove me with some vehemence, it is at the same time in so friendly and so reasonable a manner, that I kiss the rod which beats me, and give you as sincere thanks for your admonitions, as I ever did for any of your civilities and services. I am sensible that nothing could be more unsuitable to my attachment towards you, and my respect towards the Prince of Conti, than to have conducted myself so as that this story should have come to your ears by any other canal than through myself. But I considered you as one hundred leagues distant from Paris. I wrote indeed to Baron d'Olbach, without either recommending or expecting secrecy: but I thought this story, like others, would be told to eight or ten people; in a week or two, twenty or thirty more might hear it, and it would require three months before it would reach you at Pougues. I little imagined, that a private story, told to a private gentleman, could run over a whole

kingdom in a moment: if the King of England had declared war against the King of France, it could not have been more suddenly the subject of conversation. This, I own, misled me; I delayed writing to you a few posts, expecting every day to hear something that would enable me to give you a more decisive view of the affair, and at the same time might enable you to give me that counsel on which I so much depended. I ask you ten thousand pardons. You see my error proceeded only from a blunder in my reasoning. I beg it of you to make the Prince of Conti sensible of my contrition, after you have yourself pardoned me.

As to the other point, more material than any failure of civility even towards you, I mean my too great violence and precipitation in accusing Rousseau, I beg of you to weigh the following considerations:—Think of the effect of such an outrageous letter, wrote after a long train of civilities and services, and wrote at the very moment that I had consummated all these and brought them to a happy period. Consider also, that I immediately discovered, that this rage, if real, was not the result of a sudden passion in him, but had been secretly boiling in his breast during near three months, and had never relented a moment, even while I was rendering him the greatest services.

Reflect likewise, that his letter contained a most studied premeditated lie against me, viz. his account of our evening conversation the last time I saw him in London. You know I wrote you an account of that conversation, very opposite to

that which he delivers. It was impossible that any report or mistake could mislead him in that particular: and nothing could aggravate the atrocity of such a lie; of a lie invented by him against me. But what chiefly determined me at once to break all measures with him and to make our rupture as public as possible, was, the consideration of his memoirs; in which I was, no doubt, to make a fine figure. I have mentioned this circumstance to you already. You see it is always uppermost in his thoughts. He flatters me obliquely with his panegyrics in his letter of the 22d of March: he threatens me with his satire in that of the 23d of June. What could I do in that situation? If I was to keep our rupture a secret, he would multiply his lies without number; and these would certainly gain the attention, and might gain the belief of the world, if supposed to come from a man who was living in friendship with me. The quarrel, you say, might have been made up: but a quarrel without the least pretence or reasons, never could be made up; for the cause still remained, viz. his obligations to me, which he never could forgive. There could not surely be less occasion of quarrel, if he had had common sense or gratitude, than when I was one hundred and fifty miles distant from him, and was occupying myself continually in his service.

Allow me to tell you, my dear friend, that the event has justified my reasoning. Though I wrote him a very decent letter, as you saw, I got back a studied oration, or invective, against me, of eighteen folio pages, full of the same virulence and lies con-

tained in his short epistle. I have given some accounts of it to D'Alembert, who will communicate them to you. I should have wrote the same to you; but I knew not where you was, nor how to direct to you, nor when you was expected in Paris. I have drawn up the whole story in a short narrative, and have inserted all the letters and papers; and have delivered the pacquet to General Conway, to be sent by the first courier to M. D'Alembert. It is not with a view of having it published, which both he and I are averse to, but to lie by him in case of need, as he is so unexpectedly and absurdly brought into the quarrel. I have struck out your name in one place, as suspecting that you would not care to be mentioned in such an affair. When you peruse this long letter of Rousseau, you will think that it aggravates extremely his guilt, except only in one particular, that it gives us reason to suspect him an arrant madman.

All the conjectures that have been formed at Paris, are without foundation. No mortal ever gave him false information against me: he never heard of any such pleasantry as that you mention, if such a thing ever existed. He acknowledges I behaved always towards him with perfect civility while we lived together; but yet I was all along a perfidious traitor, in the manner you shall see, but never, I am sure, will be able to conjecture.

But, dear Madam, I find, that imperceptibly I owe him still a greater grudge than any I have mentioned: he occupies all my thoughts while I am writing to you, and gives me no leisure either to speak to you of myself, or any of our common friends.

I hope the waters of Pougues agreed perfectly with the Prince of Conti. I hear Madame De Barbantane does not go to Florence, which pleases me very much. I ought to have wrote to her about this unhappy affair; but in desiring you to communicate to her my letter, I considered myself as writing to you in common. Lord Tavistock is very happy, as is also the Duke of Bedford, on account of the increase of his family by the accession of a new boy. I passed some days at Woburn lately. You know that every thing is decided here by bets. The Duke has taken My Lady Tavistock for a third son, against any woman in England who is not pregnant. I passed yesterday with Lord Holdernesse at Zion Hill: you may conjecture that you was mentioned at least once or twice by us. I was much satisfied with his account of the state of your health. The Bishop of Lavaur was so kind as to send me a copy of his sermon, which is as good as a sermon and a panegyric can well be. Your son still leaves you soon for Italy; and you are probably at this moment occupied in more worthy and more interesting details than any which can come to you from this part of the world. Write me, however, a short note, after you have perused my narrative. Believe me to be ever yours, with the greatest sincerity.

DAVID HUME, TO THE MARCHIONESS DE BARBANTANE.

Lisle Street, Leicester-fields,
29th of August, 1766.

It is not easy for you, dear Madam, to imagine the pleasure which your letter gave me. Nothing could be more obliging than your writing to me on this occasion, and in such obliging terms. It was the true method of making me compensation for all the vexations occasioned by so strange and surprising an incident, which surely never had its parallel in the world. But though I have long ago forgot all the uneasiness which it gave me, and still more when I find that you take part in it, I have suffered a real loss, which I cannot easily repair. I was just ready to set out for Scotland, in order to visit my friends, and take leave of them, when I received that horrible letter, accusing me of the blackest crimes, in return for all my favours and good offices. I was then necessarily detained at London, in order to clear up so capital a charge. I was engaged in a correspondence with Paris, which I could not in honour neglect, and thus a great deal of time has been uselessly and disagreeably lost. But it is with pleasure I hear from Lord Tavistock, that you are not to attend M. De Barbantane into

Italy, and that we may still hope to enjoy your company at Paris. I should have been sorry to hear of your setting out for Florence at all; but much more without my being able to bid you adieu.

I am very well satisfied, that you think with regard to this quarrel in the same manner with Madame de Boufflers; but I am persuaded both you and she will change somewhat your sentiments after you have seen the suite of papers which I have desired her to communicate to you, after she has received them from M. D'Alembert. You will see that the only possible alleviation of this man's crime is, that he is entirely mad; and even then, he will be allowed a dangerous and pernicious madman, and of the blackest and most atrocious mind.

The King and Queen of England expressed a strong desire to see these papers, and I was obliged to put them into their hand. They read them with avidity, and entertain the same sentiments that must strike every one. The King's opinion confirms me in the resolution not to give them to the public, unless I be forced to it by some attack on the side of my adversary, which it will therefore be wisdom in him to avoid.

We hear that you was much alarmed in France with the prospect of war, upon Mr. Pitt's being taken into the ministry. That apprehension was always without foundation; but now more than ever, on account of his losing all his popularity, merely on account of his accepting a peerage. Of all the

caprices of the people, in all ages, never was any more ridiculous and surprising. Lord Chatham is as much detested as ever Mr. Pitt was adored, without its being possible to assign any reason for this alteration. The folly, it is true, will probably pass in time; but this minister will never fully recover his former consideration, on account of his leaving the House of Commons, which is the great scene of business.

We have heard lately very strange stories from France, which excite horrour in every one, and give me a sensible concern. You conjecture that I mean the atrocious punishment of the Chevalier De la Barre by the parliament of Paris, on account of some youthful levities. Such of my friends as are not over favourable to France, insult me on this occasion; and surely, if our accounts be true, nothing can do less honour to the country. It is strange, that such cruelty should be found among a people so celebrated for humanity, and so much bigotry amid so much knowledge and philosophy. I am pleased to hear, that the indignation was as general in Paris as it is in all foreign countries.

I saw to-day an Italian Abbé, and talked to him about the Court of Florence. He says that it has become a very disagreeable place, and that nothing can exceed the narrowness of mind in the Archduke and Archduchess. That princess rubs off, with her own hands, the paint and patches from the faces of the ladies, and makes them presents of tippets to cover their bosoms.

I beseech you, never go to a place where you must be virtuous by constraint, lest you should take an inclination to become otherwise. You may, perhaps, be allowed, as ambassadress from France, to keep your *rouge ;* but are you sure that you may not take a quarrel with virtue, when you see it accompanied with so much folly and ridicule? I beg my compliments to Madame de Vierville, and that you will believe me, with the greatest regard,

Madam,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Wootton, le 30 *Août,* 1766.

UNE chose me fait grand plaisir, Madame, dans la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire, le 27 du mois dernier, et que je n'ai reçue que depuis peu de jours. C'est de connoître, à son ton, que vous êtes en bonne santé.

Vous dites, Madame, n'avoir jamais vu de lettre semblable à celle que j'ai écrite à M. Hume. Cela peut être, car je n'ai, moi, jamais rien vu de semblable à ce qui y a donné lieu. Cette lettre ne ressemble pas du moins à celles qu'écrit M. Hume, et j'espère n'en jamais écrire qui leur ressemblent.

Vous me demandez, quelles sont les injures dont je me plains. M. Hume m'a forcé de lui dire, que je voyois ses manœuvres secrettes, et je l'ai fait. Il m'a forcé d'entrer là-dessus en explication ; je l'ai fait encore, et dans le plus grand détail. Il peut vous rendre compte de tout cela, Madame ; pour moi, je ne me plains de rien.

Vous me reprochez de me livrer à d'odieux soupçons. A cela je réponds, que je ne me livre point à des soupçons. Peut-être auriez-vous pu, Madame, prendre pour vous un peu des leçons que vous me donnez ; n'être pas si facile à croire que je croyois si facilement aux trahisons, et vous dire, pour moi, une partie des choses que vous vouliez que je me disse pour M. Hume.

Tout ce que vous m'alléguez en sa faveur, forme un préjugé très fort, très raisonnable, d'un très grand poids, surtout pour moi, et que je ne cherche point à combattre. Mais les préjugés ne font rien contre les faits. Je m'abstiens de juger du caractère de M. Hume, que je ne connois pas : je ne juge que de sa conduite avec moi, que je connois. Peut-être suis-je le seul homme qu'il ait jamais haï ;—mais aussi, quelle haine ! Un même cœur suffiroit-il à deux, comme celle-là ?

Vous vouliez que je me refusasse à l'évidence. C'est ce que j'ai fait, autant que j'ai pu. Que je démentisse le témoignage de mes sens ; c'est un conseil plus facile à donner qu'à suivre. Que je ne crusse rien de ce que je sentois, et que je consultasse là-dessus les amis que j'ai en France. Mais, si je ne dois rien croire de ce que je vois, et de ce que je sens, ils le croiront bien

moins encore, eux qui ne le voient pas, et qui le sentent encore moins. Quoi, Madame! quand un homme vient, entre quatre yeux, m'enfoncer à coups redoublés un poignard dans le sein, il faut, avant d'oser lui dire qu'il me frappe, que j'aille au loin demander, aux autres, s'il m'a frappé?

L'extrême emportement que vous trouvez dans ma lettre me fait présumer, Madame, que vous n'êtes pas de sang-froid vous-même, ou que la copie que vous avez vue est falsifiée. Dans la circonstance funeste, où j'ai écrit cette lettre, et où M. Hume m'a forcé de lui écrire, sachant bien ce qu'il en vouloit faire, j'ose dire qu'il falloit avoir une âme forte, pour se modérer à ce point. Il n'y a que les infortunés qui sentent combien, dans l'excès d'une affliction de cette espèce, il est difficile d'allier la douceur avec la douleur.

M. Hume s'y est pris autrement, je l'avoue. Tandis qu'en réponse à cette même lettre il m'écrivoit en termes décens, et même honnêtes, il écrivoit à M. D'Holbach, et à tout le monde, en termes un peu différens. Il a rempli Paris, la France, les gazettes, l'Europe entière, de choses que ma plume ne sait pas écrire, et qu'elle ne répétera jamais. Etoit-ce comme cela, Madame, que j'aurois dû faire?

Vous dites que j'aurois dû modérer mon emportement contre un homme, qui m'a réellement servi. Dans la longue lettre que j'ai écrite à M. Hume, le 10 Juillet, j'ai pesé avec la plus grande équité les services qu'il m'a rendus. Il étoit digne de moi d'y faire partout pencher la balance en sa faveur, et c'est ce que j'ai

fait. Mais, quand tous ces grands services auroient autant de réalité que d'ostentation, s'ils n'ont été que des pièges qui couvroient les plus noirs desseins, je ne vois pas qu'ils exigent une grande reconnoissance.

Les liens de l'amitié sont respectables, même après qu'ils sont rompus. Cela est vrai, et je l'ai dit, avant vous. Mais cela suppose que ces liens ont existé. Malheureusement ils ont existé, de ma part. Aussi le parti que j'ai pris de gémir tout bas, et de me taire, est-il l'effet du respect que je me dois.

Et les seules apparences de ce sentiment le sont aussi. Voilà, Madame, la plus étonnante maxime dont j'ai jamais ouï parler. Comment! Sitôt qu'un homme prend en public le masque de l'amitié, pour me nuire plus à son aise, sans même daigner se cacher de moi; sitôt qu'il me baise, en m'assassinant, je dois n'oser plus me défendre, ni parer ses coups, ni m'en plaindre, pas même à lui? Je ne puis croire que c'est là ce que vous avez voulu dire; cependant, en relisant ce passage dans votre lettre, je n'y puis trouver aucun autre sens.

Je vous suis obligé, Madame, des soins que vous voulez prendre pour ma défense, mais je ne les accepte pas. M. Hume a si bien jetté le masque, qu'à présent sa conduite publique parle seule, et dit tout à qui ne veut pas s'aveugler. Mais quand cela ne seroit pas, je ne veux point qu'on me justifie, parceque je n'ai pas besoin de justification; et je ne veux point qu'on m'excuse, parceque cela est au-dessous de moi. Je souhaiterois seulement que, dans l'abîme de malheurs où je suis plongé, les

personnes que j'honore m'écrivissent des lettres plus raisonnables et moins accablantes, afin que j'eusse au moins la consolation de conserver pour elles tous les sentimens, qu'elles m'ont inspirés.

(TRANSLATION.)

Wootton, 30th August, 1766.

THERE is one thing which yields me great pleasure, Madam, in the letter which you did me the honour to write to me on the 27th ult., and which I did not receive till a few days ago. I conclude from its tone, that you are in good health.

You say, Madam, that you have never seen a letter like that which I wrote to Mr. Hume. This may be the case; for never have I, on my part, seen any thing like the transaction which gave rise to it. This letter bears no resemblance, at least, to those which Mr. Hume is in the habit of writing, and I hope I never shall write any which resemble them.

You ask what are the injuries of which I complain? Mr. Hume compelled me to declare to him, that I perceived his secret machinations, and I did so. He forced me to explain myself on this point;—this I have likewise done, and in great detail. He may give you an account of all this, Madam; for my part, I complain of nothing.

You reproach me with giving myself up to odious suspicions. To this I reply, that it is not to suspicions that I give myself up. Haply, Madam, you might have applied to yourself some of the lessons which you give me;—not to be so ready to suppose that I easily believe in treachery; and you might have advanced in my favour, some of the arguments which you wish me to advance in favour of Mr. Hume.

Every thing which you alledge in his favour, forms a prejudication, very powerful, very reasonable, of great weight, especially for me, and which I shall not attempt to combat. But prejudgments are of no avail, opposed to facts. I abstain from judging the character of Mr. Hume, which I do not know; I judge only his conduct towards me, which I do know. I am perhaps the only man whom he has ever hated—but at the same time, what a hatred! Could one and the same heart suffice for a double hatred, like this?

You wish me to discard all evidence. This is what I have done, as much as was in my power:—that I should distrust the testimony of my own senses—this is a counsel much easier to give than to follow:—that I should believe nothing of what I feel, and that I should consult, on this head, the friends which I have in France. But, if I am to believe nothing of what I see, and of what I feel, those friends would believe it still less, they who do not see it, and still less feel it. What, Madam! when a man attempts, between four eyes, to plunge a dagger in my breast, when he redoubles his blows, must I, before I dare

tell him that he strikes me, go to a distance, and demand of others whether he has struck me?

The extreme warmth which you discover in my letter, causes me to presume, Madam, that you are not possessed of too much *sang-froid* yourself; or else that the copy you have seen has been spurious. Under the fatal circumstances in which I wrote this letter, and in which Mr. Hume forced me to write it, knowing perfectly to what use he meant to put it, I may venture to say, that it was necessary to possess a strong mind, to carry moderation to this point. None but the unfortunate can judge how extremely difficult it is, in the excess of an affliction of this nature, to combine mildness with suffering.

Mr. Hume has adopted a different course, I avow. At the very time that, in reply to this self-same, letter, he wrote to me in decent, and even in courteous terms, he wrote to M. D'Holbach, and to the world at large, in terms rather different. He has filled Paris, France, the gazettes, and the whole of Europe, with things which my pen is not competent to write, and which it never shall repeat. It is thus, Madam, that I ought to have acted?

You say, that I ought to moderate my resentment against a man, who has been of real service to me. In the long letter, which I wrote to Mr. Hume, on the 10th of July, I have weighed and pondered, with the greatest equity, the services which he has rendered me. It was worthy of me, throughout the whole of this examination, to cause the balance to preponderate in his

favour, and this is precisely what I have done. But, had even all these great services possessed as much of reality as of ostentation, still if they have been only so many snares, which concealed the blackest designs, I do not see that they call for extraordinary gratitude.

The bonds of friendship ought to be held in respect, even after they are rent asunder. This is true, and I have made this remark before you. But this pre-supposes such bonds to have really existed. Unfortunately they have only existed on my side. So likewise the course which I have adopted, to sigh in secret and be silent, is the effect of the respect which I owe to myself.

And the mere semblance of this sentiment is so likewise. Truly, Madam, this is the most astonishing maxim of which I have ever heard speak. How! The moment that a man assumes in public the mask of friendship, in order to injure me the more at his ease, without deigning even to conceal his designs from me; the moment that he salutes me, whilst he assassinates me, I have no longer the right to defend myself, to ward off his blows, nor yet to complain of his perfidy, not even to himself? I cannot prevail upon myself to believe that such is the doctrine which you meant to inculcate to me; and yet, on re-perusing this passage in your letter, I can discover no other meaning in it.

I am obliged to you, Madam, for the pains you are pleased to take in my defence, but I do not accept of them. Mr. Hume has so completely thrown aside the mask, that at present his

public conduct speaks sufficiently for itself, and proclaims the whole to every one who is not wilfully blind. But even were this not the case, I do not choose that any one should justify me, because I stand in no need of justification; and I do not choose that any one should make excuses for me, because this is beneath me. All I could wish is that, in the abyss of misfortunes in which I am plunged, those persons whom I honour, might write me letters of a more reasonable and less distressing tenour, in order that I might at least have the consolation of preserving entire for them the sentiments with which they have inspired me.

DAVID HUME, A M.**

1766.

Je ne sais si vous avez entendu parler des derniers événemens arrivés à ce pauvre malheureux Rousseau, qui est devenu tout-à-fait extravagant, et qui mérite la plus grande compassion. Il y a environ trois semaines qu'il partit, sans en donner le moindre avis, de chez M. Davenport, n'emmenant avec lui que sa gouvernante, laissant la plus grande partie de ses effets, et environ trente guinées d'argent. On trouva aussi une lettre sur sa table, pleine de reproches contre son hôte, auquel il imputoit d'avoir été complice de mon projet pour le ruiner

et le déshonorer. Il prit le chemin de Londres ; et M. Davenport me pria de le faire chercher, et de découvrir comment on pourroit lui envoyer son bagage et son argent. On fut quinze jours sans en entendre parler, jusqu'à ce qu'enfin le Chancelier reçut de lui la lettre la plus extravagante, datée de Spalding dans le Comté de Lincoln. Il dit à ce magistrat qu'il est en chemin pour Douvres, dans le dessein de quitter le royaume (observez que Spalding s'éloigne tout-à-fait du chemin); mais qu'il n'ose pas faire un pas de plus, ni sortir de la maison, dans la crainte de ses ennemis. Il conjure donc le Chancelier de lui envoyer un guide autorisé pour le conduire, et il le lui demande comme le dernier acte d'hospitalité de cette nation envers lui. Quelques jours après j'appris de M. Davenport qu'il avoit reçu une nouvelle lettre de Rousseau, datée encore de Spalding, dans laquelle il lui témoigne le plus vif repentir. Il parle de sa triste et malheureuse situation, et annonce le dessein de retourner dans sa première retraite de Wootton. J'espérai qu'il auroit recouvré ses sens ; point du tout. Au bout de quelques heures le Général Conway reçut une lettre de lui datée de Douvres, distant de deux cents milles de Spalding. Il n'avoit guère mis que deux jours à faire cette longue route. Il n'y a rien de plus fou que cette lettre ; il suppose qu'il est prisonnier d'état entre les mains du Général Conway, et cela en conséquence de mes suggestions ; il le conjure de lui permettre de quitter le royaume ; il représente le danger qu'il court d'être assassiné ; et en même tems qu'il avoue qu'il a été déshonoré en Angleterre pendant sa vie, il

prédit que sa mémoire sera justifiée après sa mort ; il dit qu'il a composé un volume de mémoires principalement relatifs au traitement qu'il a éprouvé en Angleterre, et à l'état de captivité dans lequel il est détenu. Si le Général veut bien lui accorder la permission de partir, il lui fera remettre ce volume, qui est déposé dans des mains sures, et jamais il ne paroîtra rien de lui contre la nation et ses ministres. Il ajoute, comme si un rayon de raison avoit tout-à-coup pénétré dans son âme, et en parlant de lui-même à la troisième personne, *qu'il abandonne pour toujours le projet d'écrire sa vie et ses mémoires, mais qu'il ne lui échappera jamais de bouche ni par écrit un seul mot de plainte sur les malheurs qui lui sont arrivés en Angleterre ; qu'il ne parlera jamais de M. Hume, ou qu'il n'en parlera qu'avec honneur ; et que lorsqu'il sera pressé de s'expliquer sur quelques indiscrètes plaintes qui lui sont quelquefois échappées dans le fort de ses peines, il les rejettera sans mystère sur son humeur aigrie et portée à la défiance et aux ombrages par ce malheureux penchant, ouvrage de ses malheurs et qui maintenant y met le comble.*

Je vous informe de tous ces détails, afin que vous voyiez que ce pauvre homme est absolument fou, et que par conséquent il ne peut être dans le cas d'être poursuivi par les lois, ni l'objet d'une peine civile. Il a certainement passé à Calais ; et se trouvant dans le ressort du parlement de Paris, il sera probablement arrêté, et peut-être traité sans aucun égard à sa malheureuse situation. Quand j'étois à Paris, j'ai vu des traits d'une animosité peu commune contre lui de la part de plusieurs membres de cet

illustre corps, et je crains que sa présence ne fasse revivre contre lui ce même zèle ardent et amer. Il me paroît donc intéressant que quelques personnes de poids et de mérite sachent de la première main le véritable état des choses, afin que les ennemis de ce malheureux homme, voyant leur vengeance pleinement rassasiée par ses infortunes passées, n'appesantissent pas plus longtems sur lui des peines trop fortes pour qu'un homme puisse les soutenir. J'ai parlé à M. de Guerchy, afin qu'il représente la chose sous ce point de vue, s'il en écrit à sa Cour; et je vous adresse cette lettre à cachet volant, sous l'enveloppe de M. De Montigny, pour le cas où vous auriez quitté Paris. Il faut que vous ou lui instruisiez M. de Malesherbes. M. de Trudaine joindra aussi ses bons offices; et je ne doute pas que par vos efforts réunis, et s'agissant d'une chose aussi raisonnable, vous ne lui procuriez une entière sureté. S'il pouvoit être établi dans une retraite sure et tranquille, sous la protection de quelque personne prudente, il a de quoi subvenir à tous ses besoins : il a, si je ne me trompe, environ cent Louis de rentes de lui-même. Le Roi d'Angleterre vient de lui en accorder encore autant; et l'on pourroit trouver quelque part en France quelque personne qui, par égard pour son génie, le traiteroit avec amitié et l'empêcheroit de faire du mal à lui et aux autres. Il seroit à propos que sa gouvernante entrât dans le projet : je sais cependant que M. Davenport n'avoit pas une idée bien avantageuse de son caractère et de sa conduite, lorsqu'ils vivoient chez lui; mais Rousseau est accoutumé à cette femme, et elle sait mieux que

qui que ce soit entrer dans ses humeurs. On soupçonne qu'elle a entretenu toutes ses chimères afin de le chasser d'un pays où, n'ayant personne avec qui elle pût parler, elle s'ennuyoit à la mort.

DAVID HUME, TO MR. ***

(TRANSLATION.)

1766.

I DON'T know whether you have heard of the last events which have happened to that poor unfortunate Rousseau, who is become quite mad, and is entitled to the greatest pity. He left Mr. Davenport's house about three weeks ago, without the least previous notice, taking with him his housekeeper only, and leaving behind the greatest part of his effects, and about 30 guineas in cash. A letter was also found on his table, full of invectives against his host, whom he accuses of having been an accomplice in my design to ruin and dishonour him. He took the road to London; and Mr. Davenport requested me to send in search of him, and to find means of transmitting his luggage and money to him. A fortnight elapsed without any tidings of him. At last the Chancellor received from him the most extravagant letter, dated Spalding, in Lincolnshire, in which he informs this magistrate, that he is on the road to Dover, with the view to quit the kingdom, (observe however that Spalding is quite out of the road,) but that he

dares not to move one step forward, or leave the house, for fear of his enemies. He therefore intreats the Chancellor to send him a guide authorized to conduct him; and he asks this favour as the last act of hospitality of this nation towards him. Some days after Mr. Davenport informed me, that he had received another letter from Rousseau, still dated Spalding, in which he expresses the liveliest repentance. He speaks of his deplorable and unfortunate situation, and announces the design of returning to his former retreat at Wootton. I hoped that he had recovered his senses; no such thing. A few hours after, General Conway received from him a letter dated Dover, 200 miles off Spalding. He had been little more than two days in performing this long journey. Nothing can be more extravagant than his letter. He supposes himself a state prisoner in the hands of General Conway, and that at my suggestion; he beseeches to be permitted to quit the kingdom, represents the danger which he runs of being assassinated, and whilst he complains that he has been dishonoured in England in his life-time, he foretells that his memory will be justified after his death; he says he has written a volume of memoirs, relating chiefly to the treatment which he has experienced in England, and the state of captivity in which he is kept. If the General vouchsafes to grant him his leave to depart, he will send him this volume, which is deposited in safe hands, and never publish any thing against the nation and its ministers. He adds, as if a ray of reason had suddenly penetrated his soul, and speaking of himself in the third person, *that he relinquishes*

for ever the design of writing his life and memoirs; that no complaint shall ever escape from him, either by word of mouth or in writing, about the misfortunes which have befallen him in England; that he never will speak of Mr. Hume but honourably; and that if he should be pressed to explain some indiscreet complaints which have at times escaped him in the height of his pains, he will candidly ascribe them to his disposition, which has been soured and rendered susceptible of distrust and suspicions, by this unfortunate propensity, the work of his misfortunes, and by which they are now heightened.

I acquaint you with all these details, that you may see that this poor man is absolutely mad, and that of course he cannot be made amenable to the laws, nor liable to any civil process. He is most certainly gone over to Calais, and being thus within the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris, he probably will be arrested, and perhaps treated without any regard being had for his unfortunate situation. When I was at Paris, I witnessed traits of uncommon animosity against him, on the part of several members of that illustrious Corporation; and his presence will, I fear, rekindle against him the same bitter and ardent zeal. I therefore think it of importance, that some persons of weight and merit should be acquainted with the true state of things from the first authority, that the enemies of this unfortunate man, seeing their vengeance fully satiated by his past misfortunes, may not any longer overwhelm him with sufferings too heavy to be borne. I have spoken to M. De

Guerchy, that he may represent matters in this light, if he writes about it to his Court; and I send you this letter, open under cover to M. De Montigny, in case you might have left Paris. Either you or he must inform M. De Malesherbes of all this. M. De Trudaine will likewise join his good offices; and I doubt not but by your united efforts, considering the reasonableness of the request, you will insure his perfect safety. If he could be established in a safe and tranquil retreat, under the protection of some prudent person, he has sufficient means to provide for all his wants. He enjoys, if I am not mistaken, an income of about one hundred Louis of his own; the King of England has just granted him as much; and some person might be found somewhere in France, who, out of respect for his genius, would treat him kindly, and prevent his injuring himself and others. It would be proper that his housekeeper should be a party to the plan: I know, however, that Mr. Davenport had no very advantageous idea of her character and conduct when they lived at his house; but Rousseau is accustomed to this female, and she knows better than any one else how to humour him. She is suspected of having entertained his chimerical fears, in order to drive him from a country of which, having no one to talk to, she was tired to death.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Edinburgh, 2d December, 1766.

I HAVE had one of your letters, dear Madam, too long before me unanswered. I have been of late in a way of life somewhat unsettled: I came down to visit my friends here and put some affairs in order; but find myself so entangled with friends and affairs, that I know not when I shall get rid of them. I agree heartily to what you say, when you wish you had not allowed me to depart from Paris: it was not so necessary as I imagined to depart from it; and notwithstanding my inclination, I find unexpected difficulties in returning. I am confined here for the greater part of this winter.

I had a letter from Miss Becket, wrote by your order, concerning a Negro, who called himself son to an African king at Annamaboüe. I wrote to a gentleman who had been governor of an English fort on that coast; and having transmitted him Miss Becket's letter, desired him to tell the truth of the matter. His answer only came to me lately. He says, that it is an abuse to call any of these miserable heads of tribes, kings; but even allowing them to be such, the person in question is not the son of a king; his mother only, after his birth, was married to a king, that is, was one in fifty slaves, whom he lay with, when his caprice led him. His black Majesty gave his son-in-law

as a pledge to one Hamilton, captain of a trading vessel on that coast, and received some goods in exchange. As he afterwards refused to ransom the young man, Captain Hamilton had a right to do as he did: he carried him off, and sold him with the rest of his slaves at Barbadoes. He was there found by a projecting fellow, one Creighton, or Creiton, a surgeon, who purchased him, brought him over to London, passed him for the son of a king, and got a small pension for his subsistence. The pension was afterwards withdrawn, and the young man sent back to his own country. This is the only story of note, which has passed of late years on the coast of Annamaboüe. The person you mean, either is this young man, or desires to pass himself for such. The time, the place, and some circumstances of his adventures, all concur: but as far as I can learn, he never had any thing to do with the Secretary of the Royal Society.

Thanks to God, my affair with Rousseau is now finally and totally at an end, at least on my part: for I never surely shall publish another line on that subject. It was with infinite reluctance I consented to the last publication. I lay my account that many people will condemn me for it, and will question the propriety or necessity of it: but if I had not published, many people would have condemned me as a calumniator, and as a treacherous and false friend. There is no comparison between these species of blame; and I underwent the one, to save me from the other.

There is a concluding circumstance in this affair, which has

given me some vexation: you are named, as well as Madame de Verdelin, in the English translation. I sent up to a bookseller in London copies of my original letters, that they might be inserted in the English translation. I had erased your name; but it seems not so, but that it was legible; and it is accordingly printed. The bookseller, the printer, and the compositor, all throw the blame on each other, for this accident. I ask you ten thousand pardons: but as I had the delicacy on your account to erase your name even from the manuscript copy sent over to my friends at Paris; you may easily believe, that I would never willingly have allowed it to be printed contrary to your orders.

A few posts ago I received a very curious letter from a Swiss gentleman, who resides in London, but whom I never either saw or heard of before: his name is Deyverdun, and he calls himself a native of Lausanne. He says, that he was extremely surprized to find that Rousseau had, in page 85-86, and in page 92-96, accused me for being the author or accomplice of two libels wrote against him; and he says, with regard to the last, that he has an intimate and a certain conviction of it: I was not able to give any other answer, than that I had never so much as seen either of these pretended libels. Now the Swiss gentleman tells me, that he himself was the author of them; and gives me leave to publish his letter for that purpose to the whole world. But my aversion to farther publications on that head is so great, that I shall not give this letter to the press. I have only sent a

copy of it to Mr. Davenport, to be delivered to Rousseau. If he has the least remains of a sentiment of honour, he must fall on his face before me, upon the perusal of this letter.

I have not heard any thing, of a long time, that has given me more pleasure than what you write me, that you are perfectly satisfied with the character and conduct of your son. It is a delicious sentiment, and will be a consolation to you through life. Adieu, my dear friend: my regrets for parting with you are as lively as they were at the first moment. Please to direct to me as before—to the care of Mr. Coutts, banker, in the Strand, London.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Edinburgh, 2d of February, 1767.

Mr. Ainslie was mistaken. The house in which I live, was purchased by me five or six years ago. I was prevented by a singular accident from disposing of it a very little before I left Paris. Do you not remember, that I set out to pass the Christmas with you at L'isle Adam, but could get no further than Moselle, where I staid all night, and returned next day, with great difficulty, to Paris? There was a great fall of snow, which rendered the roads quite impracticable. I had wrote a letter, to dispose of my house, and I had left this letter

with my landlord at Paris, to be sent to the post-house on the post-day. Happily, or rather, I believe, unhappily, the letter had not gone off; upon which I kept it, as thinking that if any affair called me to this country, it would be very inconvenient for me not to have a house to retire to. Had not this unexpected accident happened, my house would have been disposed of; and as this is a growing town, where it is very difficult to find lodgings, I should never more have thought of returning to it.

I kept, however, my resolution of establishing myself at Paris; and for that purpose, I hired no less than two houses; one was in the Fauxbourg St. Germain, which Madame Geoffrin was so good as to undertake to furnish for me. But this I found, on reflection, too small; and though I paid rent for it, I was resolved not to make use of it. I hired another house in the quarter of the Palais-Royal, which Baron d'Holbach undertook to furnish before I could return from London. Had this bargain taken place, I should at this time have been established at Paris, and probably for life. But the proprietor of the house was absent, being the head of the commission sent down to Brittany: I made the contract with his agent, who had a power from him; but in the mean time, somebody had wrote to the proprietor himself, and had hired the house immediately from him. This event happened only two days before my departure; and being hurried by the Duke of Choiseul's orders to M. Rousseau, I had not time to look for another house.

You see then, dear Madam, what a complication of accidents

has prevented me from being at present a Parisian, and I hope your constant guest and attendant.

But I am now in Edinburgh, and finding myself at my own fire-side, amid my books, conversing with company who are both estimable and agreeable, my former passion for study, derived both from nature and habit, has seized me with greater violence, by reason of so long an interruption, and I am so occupied with present things, that I form no distant resolution; at least, none that I shall speak of, lest I should not be believed, and lest my not executing it should expose me to the reproach of levity.

But what terms shall I employ to express my gratitude and acknowledgments to the Prince of Conti, for the honour which he intends me? You must here come to my assistance, and aid me with your usual eloquence, otherwise I shall never be able to do justice to my internal sentiments. But unfortunately, instead of corresponding to marks of distinction so honourable to me, I may even be thought wanting in my due regard to the Prince.

It was certainly my duty to have fixed sooner my resolution, and to have notified it to you; but by the letters which passed between us when I was at London, it appeared to me that I had sufficiently explained my passion for retreat and solitude, and that you had made the Prince sensible that nothing but my sincere regard for him made me worthy of the honour he intended me. In other respects, my habits of life disqualified me from profiting by it. I beseech you, dear Madam, give me your

aid, where you can do it so much justice, and where I stand so much in need of it.

I am almost vexed to find, that my Fridays are too well supplied, and still more that I myself cannot enjoy the good company which assemble with you on that day. I desire to be remembered to all and sundry of them. Please to tell M. D'Alembert, that if I were not as lazy as he is at writing letters, I should certainly have taken care not to allow our correspondence to drop. I am right in my conjecture, that we are not to expect any answer from Rousseau: Mr. Davenport writes me, that he is entirely occupied in writing his Memoirs, which will be a very bulky book, where M. D'Alembert and I will probably make a great figure. But that affair is now so totally ridiculous, that it can no longer give us the least shadow of anxiety. Agreeably to the licence of this country, there has been a great deal of raillery on the incident, thrown out in the public papers, but all against that unhappy man. There is even a print engraved of it: M. Rousseau is represented as a Yahoo, newly caught in the woods; I am represented as a farmer, who caresses him and offers him some oats to eat, which he refuses in a rage; Voltaire and D'Alembert are whipping him up behind; and Horace Walpole making him horns of *papier maché*. The idea is not altogether absurd.

I interest myself very much in Madame de Barbantane. I fancy that the way of life you mention will not be disagreeable to her,

considering the sobriety of her disposition and character. I am obliged to you for the intelligence you give me of our other common friends and acquaintances, by whom I have a great ambition to be remembered. I need not tell you what share you have in my attachment and regard.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

London, 1st March, 1767.

THERE has happened, dear Madam, a small change in my situation and fortune since I wrote to you. I was then very deeply immersed in study, and thought of nothing but of retreat and indolence for the rest of my life, when I was surprized with a letter from Lord Hertford, urging me to come to London, and accept of the office of Depute-Secretary of State under his brother. As my Lord knew that this step was contrary to the maxims which I had laid down to myself, he engaged my Lady Hertford to write me at the same time, and to inform me how much she and my Lord desired my compliance. I sate down, once or twice, to excuse myself; but I own I could not find terms to express my refusal of a request made by persons, to whose friendship I had been so much obliged. I foresaw also, that a place was offered me of credit and confidence; that it connected me with General Conway, one of the

best men, in every respect, of this country; and that my continuance in place was likely to be very short, both because of the usual fluctuations of power in this country, and because the General, I know, was only waiting an opportunity of returning from the civil, to his usual military line. Behold me, then, embarked for some time in state affairs; and my former chains, from old friends and family connexions, exchanged for others, of a less durable nature. For I do not suspect myself, at my years, and after such established habits of retreat, of being ensnared by this glimpse of court favour to commence a new course of life, and relinquish my literary ambition for the pursuit of riches and honours in the state. On the contrary, I feel myself at present like a banished man in a strange country; I mean, not as I was while with you at Paris, but as I should be in Westphalia or Lithuania, or any place, the least to my fancy in the world.

I have seen Lord Holdernesse since I came to London, and immediately commenced a conversation about you: I think it is a cement of friendship between his Lordship and me, that we are of the same sentiments on that head.

DAVID HUME, TO THE MARCHIONESS DE BARBANTANE.

London, 13th of March, 1767.

You may probably, dear Madam, have heard of the disaster that has happened to Lord Tavistock, and may have heard it represented in more dismal colours than the true; which is the reason that I now take the liberty to write to you. I know that your friendship for him would give you the most real concern; and as there are great hopes of his recovery, I was willing to convey them to you.

Four days ago, he fell from his horse at hunting; he was taken up for dead, and on examination was found to have his skull (sa crâne) fractured in a most violent manner. A surgeon was immediately sent for; a difficult operation was successfully performed; and he was brought to his senses. The symptoms have ever since been very favourable, though his situation is still very dangerous. It is impossible to conceive any one more universally regretted. Nobody believes that the Duke would survive his son's death; his condition is, in a great measure, concealed from Lady Tavistock, who is six months gone with child. I sent about an hour ago to Bedford House, that I might give you the most recent account, and had a very favourable answer. As it

is thought that the four first days were most critical, there are now good hopes entertained of his recovery.

Madame De Boufflers would probably tell you, that I am now, from a philosopher, degenerated into a petty statesman, and am entirely occupied in politics. I am too well acquainted with our usual fluctuations and revolutions, to believe that this avocation will be durable. But whatever I am, or wherever I live, believe me to be, with great sincerity,

Dear Madam,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

London, 17th March, 1767.

YOUR letter, dear Madam, for the first time in my life, gave me uneasiness and no less surprize. Surely, whenever the offer of your friend was mentioned, at the same time that I expressed the highest sense of his goodness, I never spoke of any thing but difficulties and objections. I was conscious how little qualified I am for that course of life pointed out to me, and how much the habits of study and indolence, and liberty, prevailed over me, to admit of such an attachment as

was proposed. Your exhortation, and, still more, the prospect of passing much of my time in your company, had great influence over me, but were never able to overcome the internal conviction which I retained, that I should be extremely misplaced in such a situation. You will please to remember, that very early after my return to London, I wrote you a letter to this purpose, and you had the compliance to yield to my reluctance, and even to make me another proposal, the most charming and most obliging in the world, which however I delayed accepting, till I should see how far it was inconvenient to you. I mentioned the arrangements which I had taken before I left Paris, in order to convince you that I was quite serious in my resolutions of returning; resolutions in which you cannot doubt but my attachment to you had a considerable share. How it happens that you was not at the time acquainted with these arrangements, I cannot imagine: I cannot but think you have forgot. Perhaps your absence from Paris till within a few days of our departure, was the reason why I never mentioned them to you. Surely, the two persons who were so good as to promise me their assistance, live in so public a manner, that, as I never desired them to conceal the matter, they were the most likely to spread the knowledge of it among my friends and acquaintance. On the whole then, I hope to be entirely justified in your eyes; or if that should fail me, I hope to be forgiven. Provided I be restored to your favour and good opinion, I am the more indifferent about the means.

To think that I have incurred your displeasure, is too grievous to be borne; even though it should happen, as you say, that my absence from you were to be eternal. But I prognosticate better of my good fortune than to think so. Sure I am that my present connexions are rather likely to forward our re-union. This situation will not probably be durable, much less perpetual. It was only in the prospect of its terminating soon, that I accepted of it.

Last post, I informed Madame de Barbantane of this terrible accident that has happened to Lord Tavistock. I have now the pleasure to tell you that he is in a very promising way, and great hopes are entertained of his recovery.

I beg it of you, not to be long in answering me.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

London, 22d May, 1767.

MADAM,

I FIND you are desirous to hear no more of me, which, I own, is one of the greatest surprizes, and none of the least afflictions I have met with in the course of my life. However, I could not forbear writing to you, because I shall put it in your power to do an act of generosity, which, unless you

be, indeed, totally changed in every respect, must give you pleasure.

About a fortnight ago I received a letter from Mr. Davenport, telling me that Rousseau had left him one morning, without giving him the least warning; had carried off only his gouvernante, with little more clothes than he had on his back, leaving all his baggage and nearly forty pounds in Mr. Davenport's hands. There was also found on the table a letter directed to his landlord, very abusive, and reproaching him with being an accomplice with me in the project of ruining him. Mr. Davenport said he took the road towards London; and begged me to enquire him out, and learn, if possible, how his money and books might be sent after him. I could hear nothing of him, till a few days ago I was told that a very extravagant letter of his had been delivered to the Chancellor, dated from Spalding, in the county of Lincoln: he there desires that magistrate to send him a guard, in order to escort him safely to Dover, as he intends immediately to leave the kingdom, and could not travel for danger of his enemies. While I was wondering what all this would end in, I received a new letter from Mr. Davenport, telling me, that he had just received a very penitent letter from M. Rousseau, complaining of his own misery and unhappy condition, and expressing his intention of returning instantly to his former retreat at Wootton. The very same day, and almost the same hour, General Conway received a most melancholy letter from Rousseau, dated Dover, near two hundred miles distant from

Spalding. It is evident, from all these contrarieties and extravagances, that he is quite disordered in his judgment; yet are his letters, particularly that to Mr. Conway, still wrote with beauty and elegance. He laments his being alive, and regrets his being obliged to leave England, but says that he finds every body prepossessed against him; for what reason he cannot imagine, unless it be on account of his conduct towards me, in which he owns he may be to blame. He accepts, however, with gratitude the King's pension; and says he will again write to the General from Calais. He is not in his Arminian dress, so that he may perhaps pass unnoticed: but if he be discovered, as is more probable, there is nothing he has not to dread from the violence of the parliament; and little relief can be expected from the goodwill of the ministers towards him. I thought it proper to inform you, that if you hear of his being discovered and arrested, you may employ your credit in restoring him to his liberty, by representing him in his true colours, as a real and complete madman, who is an object of compassion, and can be dangerous to nobody. I find myself much inclined to say a great deal more to you about other subjects, but must check my inclination; and therefore desire only my compliments to Madame de Vierville and Madame de Barbantane, and to Miss Becket; and am,

Madam,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

London, 19*th of June*, 1767.

It was not surely, Dear Madam, with indifference that I regarded your displeasure against me. Nothing could have given me more uneasiness; and I was more afraid of the coolness of your reproaches than even of your anger. But your last letter has brought me great relief. Though our commerce should never go beyond letters (an idea however which I will never allow myself to entertain) your friendship would still be dear to me, and I should regard the loss of it as a great calamity.

Happily my dread of that event proceeded more from my own anxiety than from any reality on your part. You are only unkind not to have told me so sooner.

You ask the present state of our politics. Why, in a word, we are all in confusion. This, you'll say, is telling you nothing new; for when were we otherwise? But we are in greater confusion than usual; because of the strange condition of Lord Chatham, who was regarded as our first minister. The public here, as well as with you, believe him wholly mad; but I am assured it is not so. He is only fallen into extreme low spirits and into

nervous disorders, which render him totally unfit for business, make him shun all company, and, as I am told, set him weeping like a child, upon the least accident. Is not this a melancholy situation for so lofty and vehement a spirit as his? And is it not even an addition to his unhappiness that he retains his senses? It was a rash experiment, that of repelling the gout, which threw him into this state of mind; and perhaps a hearty fit of it may again prove a cure to him. Meanwhile, the public suffers extremely by his present imbecility: no affairs advance: the ministers fall in variance: and the King entertains thoughts of forming a new administration. The first person, whom he addresses himself to, is your friend the Duke of Bedford, whose consideration is very great, on account of his quality and riches, and friends, and above all, of his personal character. It was very happy for the Duke that, at the time of poor Tavistock's death, there were public transactions of moment before the Parliament, in which his friends urged him to take part. The natural fervour of his character insensibly engaged him in the scene. He was diverted from his own melancholy reflections, and business thus proved to him the best consolation. He has not however recovered thoroughly that terrible shock; and the Duchess, to whom the world did not ascribe so great a degree of sensibility, is still more inconsolable. On the whole, you see, that we are at present in a crisis. The Duke of Bedford would be received with open arms; but he has formed some connexions, particularly with Mr. Greenville, which are not so ac-

ceptable; and it is uncertain, whether we are to have a change of ministry or not, though the former is much more probable.

But pray, who are you to give us as Ambassador from France, in place of M. de Guerchi, who has succeeded very well among us? I think I know more or less all your *grands seigneurs;* and I amuse myself by forming conjectures on that head. M. de Chatelet, it is said, might be the man; but he did not like us enough, when he made us a visit, to be willing to pass years among us. M. de Castries is named, and I believe he would succeed perfectly, except only that he has not a wife whom he could bring along with him; but he is not on such cordial terms with your Minister, as to make him hope for this employment. I believe the Count d'Ayen aspires to that embassy: but he is perhaps too young, and has besides something of the pedant about him. Would the Prince of Beauveau wish for this station? He is not supple nor pliable enough: though the Princess is likely to succeed extremely, could she submit to the drudgery of being affable to all the world, as Madame de Guerchi is. The other day I was talking of this subject to the Prince of Masserane; who said, that he knew not whom your Court would choose; but surely, added he, they ought to choose the wisest man in France, for a station so delicate, and so essential towards preserving the general tranquillity. I wish the choice may fall on the Prince and Princess of Beauveau, and that you may come over with them. I should like to have affairs of state to transact with you and her.

General Conway will not allow that Rousseau is mad: he says, he is only whimsical and capricious. I know not whether I told you, that he had wrote from Dover a long letter to the General, in which he entreats him to give him his liberty; warns him of the danger of assassinating him in private; promises never to publish his memoirs, nor complain of the ministers and people of England, if he may be allowed to go abroad; and even engages in that case to speak well of me. All this, you'll say, is mad enough: but yet the letter is coherent and seemingly rational, and so probably will his memoirs be; and perhaps as full of genius as any others of his writings. So strange a prodigy is he! The affair of his pension was entirely settled; but as he has given authority to nobody to receive payment, he may perhaps meet with difficulties in case of a change of ministry.

You know that ministerial falls are very light accidents in this country: a fallen minister immediately rises a patriot, and perhaps mounts up to greater consideration than before. For this reason, our tottering situation does not hinder us in this family from being in great joy, by the marriage of Miss Conway to Mr. Demar. They are both your acquaintance, and seem to make a very proper marriage.

You say, that you have many interesting matters to tell me, but do not care to trust them by the common post. If they interest you, they cannot be indifferent to me. Give me some hint of them. Do they concern yourself in particular? Are

there any new prospects opening to ——? You know my meaning; or what is next best, have you lost all hopes, and laid aside all desire of that object?

You made me very happy by telling me, that your young gentleman in Florence pleased as well as interested you very much. I hope the accounts you receive of him are still satisfactory.

Adieu, my dear friend.

DAVID HUME, TO THE MARCHIONESS DE BARBANTANE.

London, 4th of August, 1767.

As Lady Tavistock, dear Madam, sees no company, I was obliged to employ Lord Ossory to make enquiries about M. de Barbantane's commissions: he told me, that they were found in the house after poor Lord Tavistock's death; and nobody knowing what to do with them, they were restored to the joiner. Ossory left the town next day; the Duke and Duchess of Bedford are in the country: but as they will come to town next month to attend Lady Tavistock's lying-in, I shall then endeavour, if possible, to recover those pieces of furniture, and to find a method of conveying them to Italy; that is, provided you at present desire it. I am happy in the most trifling occasion to mark my attachment to you.

Your present retired life, you say, is not disagreeable to you.

But do you know that it is not likely to continue long, and that your pupil may probably be Empress? If you have not heard of this design before, say not a word of it to her, or any body else. I hope in God such an event, should it happen, will not carry you to Vienna, to pass your life there in tiresome state and dignity. It would be a great disappointment to me to come to Paris, and find you a thousand miles distant.

I believe Madame de Verdelin is in the same convent with you. Please make my compliments to her. Tell her, that the reason of my not answering her letter last summer was, that a report then prevailed, that M. de Melville, Governor of the Granades, was dead; and before that mistake was cleared up, I had left London. But if I can do any thing for her service at present, she may command me.

I hope I am not lost altogether to Madame de Mauri's memory. If so, she is very ungrateful.

You have heard probably, that our Ministry was on the eve of a revolution. We were so; I thought once that I should have been out of office in two days: but all is come about again; and we seem to be more settled than ever. I had made a party with the Chevalier Darcy to pay you a visit at Paris, if I had been an ex-minister. That journey would have been sufficient to comfort me from much greater afflictions.

Believe me to be, dear Madam,
With the most sincere regard and attachment,
Your most obedient and most humble servant,
DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

London, 27th Nov. 1767.

I WAS always sensible, dear Madam, that there were several inconveniences attending one's settlement in a foreign country: but I was never much alarmed with any of them, except that of wars breaking out between France and England; an event which, from the opposite interests, and still more the contrary humours of the two nations, is always to be dreaded. In this respect, it must be owned, that France has not usually adopted such a liberal practice as that of England. No Frenchman is ever expelled this country even when the sovereigns are at war; but this is almost always the case in France; and on the commencement of the last hostilities, some Englishmen, who had great protection, and who earnestly desired to remain, were yet obliged to leave the country. I suppose the reason of this difference in conduct proceeds from the difference in our governments: for as we cannot pretend to secrecy, we care not who is acquainted with our measures; which is not precisely the case with you. This prospect, I own, always gave me uneasiness. A man, in the decline of life, to be expelled a country, which he had chosen for the place of his residence, and where he had formed a number of agreeable connexions, must suffer a

violent shock; especially, if he is to return to company less suited to him, and who are perhaps disgusted with the preference given to foreigners. But I was willing to shut my eyes to this inconvenience, which was distant, and depended on accident: I could more easily bear this prospect, than the immediate and final separation from friends whom I loved; and I shall not name to you the person who had the chief hand in my taking this determination. But here, another office has been conferred upon me, which, though I did not desire it, I could not avoid; and if I should return to settle in France, after being twice employed by the English ministry in places of trust and confidence, could I hope that, in case of a war, I should be allowed to remain unmolested; when, even considered in the light of a man of letters, I could scarcely flatter myself with enjoying that privilege? Add to this that, when I shall get rid of this office (which I hope will be soon) I am almost universally exhorted to continue my history; and all imaginable assistance has been promised me. The King himself has been pleased to order that all the records and public offices shall be open to me, and has even sent for some papers from Hanover, which he thought would be useful. You see then, my dear friend, what reason I have to remain in suspense: for even though a permission should be granted me to remain at Paris, in case of a rupture, the most unexceptionable conduct could not free me entirely from suspicion; and I must tremble at every mark of jealousy or ill-will from every clerk in office. However,

I cannot yet renounce the idea, which was long so agreeable to me, of ending my days in a society which I love, and which I found peculiarly fitted to my humour and disposition. I can only delay the taking any determination till the event shall require it of me.

I saw here with Lord Holdernesse, an architect recommended to him by you and the Prince of Conti: you may believe, that these names were not indifferent to me. I immediately gave him a letter to my friend, Mr. Adam, a man of genius, and allowed to be the best architect in this country, or perhaps in Europe. He delivered the letter; but some affairs called him suddenly from this country; so that Adam had not an opportunity to be so serviceable to him as he intended.

Horace Walpole told me he was so happy as to see you several times at Paris. I was much pleased with the account he gave me of your state of health and spirits and way of life. I hope he was not deceived. Next to this I should be happy to hear good accounts, or rather the continuance of good accounts, of the Count de Boufflers: I foresee that the satisfaction of your future life is likely to depend much on his conduct.

There is an affair broke out, which makes a great noise, between Lady Bolingbroke and your friend Beauclerc. This lady was separated from her husband some time ago; but 'tis pretended, bore a child lately to Mr. Beauclerc; and it is certain her husband has begun a process for a divorce, in which nobody doubts of his success. It is a great pity: she is

handsome, and agreeable, and ingenious, far beyond the ordinary rate. I know not whether she was of your acquaintance.

Pray remember me in the kindest and most respectful manner to Madame De Barbantane: let her know that I answered her letter long ago. This I mention, not that I looked for any answer from her; for mine required no answer. But I am really afraid that my letter might have miscarried; because I put, somewhat imprudently, an article of news in it, which might have been the cause of its being intercepted; in which case, she would naturally be inclined to blame my negligence.

I hope you remember, that the new year is approaching; and that you think of your promise at that time.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

A Trye, le 25 Février, 1768.

Je vieillis dans les ennuis, mon âme est affoiblie, ma tête est perdue, mais mon cœur est toujours le même; il n'est pas étonnant qu'il me ramène à vos pieds. Madame, vous n'êtes pas exempte de torts envers moi. Je sens vivement les miens envers vous; mais tant de maux soufferts n'ont-ils rien expié? Je ne sais pas revenir à demi; vous me connoissez assez, pour en être assurée. Ne dois-je donc plus rien espérer de vous?

Ah! Madame, rentrez en vous-même, et consultez votre âme noble. Voyez qui vous sacrifiez, et à qui! Je vous demande une heure entre le ciel et vous, pour cette comparaison. Souvenez-vous du tems, où vous avez tout fait pour moi. Combien vos soins bienfaisans seront honorés un jour! Eh, pourquoi détruire ainsi votre propre ouvrage? Pourquoi vous en ôter tout le prix? Pensez que dans l'ordre naturel vous devez beaucoup me survivre, et qu'enfin la vérité reprendra ses droits. Les hommes fins et accrédités peuvent tout, durant leur vie. Ils fascinent aisément les yeux de la multitude, toujours admiratrice de la prospérité; mais leur crédit ne leur survit pas, et sa chute met à découvert leurs intrigues. Ils peuvent produire une erreur publique, mais ils ne la peuvent éterniser, et j'ose prédire que vous verrez tôt ou tard ma mémoire en honneur. Faudra-t-il qu'alors mon souvenir, fait pour vous flatter, vous trouble? Faudra-t-il que vous vous disiez, en vous-même: J'ai vu sans pitié traîner, étouffer dans la fange, un homme digne d'estime, dont les sentimens avoient bien mérité de moi. Non, Madame, jamais la générosité que je vous connois ne vous permettra d'avoir un pareil reproche à vous faire. Pour l'amour de vous, tirez-moi de l'abîme d'indignités où je suis plongé. Faites-moi finir mes jours en paix; cela dépend de vous, et fera la gloire et la douceur des vôtres. Les motifs que je vous présente vous montrent de quelle espèce sont ceux que je crois faits pour vous émouvoir. De toutes les réparations que je pouvois vous faire, voilà, Madame, celle qui m'a paru la plus digne de vous et de moi.

(TRANSLATION.)

Trye, 25th February, 1768.

I GROW old in the midst of vexations and disgust, my soul is enfeebled, my head is distracted; but my heart is always the same; it is not astonishing, therefore, that it brings me back to your feet. Madam, you have some wrongs to reproach yourself with, in regard to me. I feel most sensibly mine towards you; but so many woes, which I have suffered, have they expiated nothing? I am not capable of making advances, by half; you know me sufficiently to be persuaded of that. Ought I then no longer to hope any thing from you? Ah! Madam, examine your own heart, consult your noble soul. Contemplate whom you sacrifice, and to whom! I ask of you an hour, between heaven and yourself, for this comparison. Call to mind the time, when you did every thing for me. How will your beneficent cares be one day honoured! Ah! why destroy in this manner your own work? why deprive yourself of all its reward? Reflect, that in the natural order of things, you may expect long to survive me, and that truth will at last resume her rights. Men of cunning and repute are all-powerful during their life-time. They easily fascinate the eyes of the multitude, always admirers of prosperity; but their credit does not survive them, and its fall lays bare their intrigues. They can give birth to a public

error, but they cannot eternalize it; and I may venture to predict, that sooner or later you will see my memory in honour. Is my remembrance, which you cherished at that time to fill you with uneasiness? Must you be reduced to say to yourself: I have beheld without pity, dragged, stifled in the mire, a man worthy of esteem, and whose sentiments have deserved well of me? No, Madam, never will the generosity, which I know you to possess, permit you to render yourself obnoxious to a similar reproach. For your own sake, extricate me from the abyss of indignities in which I am plunged. Enable me to finish my days in peace; it rests with you, and will constitute the glory and the comfort of your life. The motives which I detail to you, show you of what nature are those which I conceive calculated to work upon you. Of all the reparations which it was in my power to make you, Madam, the present has appeared to me most worthy of you and of myself.

ROUSSEAU, A MADAME LA COMTESSE DE BOUFFLERS.

Ce Jeudi, 24 Mars.

Votre lettre me touche, Madame, parce que j'y crois reconnoître le langage du cœur; ce langage qui, de votre part, m'eût rendu le plus heureux des hommes, et à bien

peu de frais. Mais n'espérant plus rien, et ne sachant plus même que désirer, je ne vous importunerai plus de mes plaintes. Si mon sort, quel qu'il soit, vous en arrachoit quelqu'une, je m'en croirois moins malheureux.

La lettre de M. le Prince de Conti me met en grande peine sur son état actuel. Oserois-je espérer, Madame, que vous voudriez bien m'en faire écrire un mot, par quelqu'un de vos gens, ou de ceux de S. A.?

Je finis brusquement, étant attendu pour aller à Gisors.

(TRANSLATION.)

Thursday, 24th March.

YOUR letter affects me, Madam, because I fancy I recognize in it the language of the heart—that language which, coming from you, would have rendered me the most happy of men, and at very little cost. But no longer hoping any thing, and no longer knowing even what to desire, I shall no longer importune you with my complaints. If my destiny, whatever it may be, shall wrest any from you, I shall account myself so much the less unhappy.

The letter of the Prince of Conti alarms me greatly on account of his actual state of health. May I presume to hope, Madam, that you will have the goodness to order some of

your attendants, or those of His Highness, to give me farther information on that subject?

I finish abruptly, as persons are waiting for me to go to Gisors.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

26th April, 1768.

I SHOULD have sooner replied, dear Madam, to your most obliging letter, had I not been prevented by an accident. Soon after, General Conway demitted his office, and my commission expired of course. Lord Hertford then told me, that he and his brother had made a point with the King and the ministers, that in consideration of my services, I should have some further provision made for me, which was immediately assented to, only loaded with this condition, by the King, that I should seriously apply myself to the consummation of my history. I replied to My Lord, that I did not think I had any farther claim, either on the public or his family; and that for a man of letters and a good economist, I had reason to esteem myself very rich. He said, that this was a more proper way of thinking for me than for my friends; but he could not yet tell me what was the provision intended, because nothing was fixed. Ever since, the ministry have been so occupied by the elections, that nothing has been done; and our politics have been in such perpetual

fluctuation, that every prospect of this nature that is delayed, must be looked on as uncertain; but, luckily, a disappointment will give me no great vexation. Meanwhile I delayed writing to you from week to week, in hopes of communicating to you this mark of goodness of my Sovereign, in return for what you was so good as to tell me of your Sovereign's goodness towards you. I suppose it was not proper for you to enter into particulars, otherwise you would have done so; as you must be sensible, that nothing can interest me more than every thing that concerns you. I do not find that this sentiment diminishes by time or absence; and even the loss of those once flattering ideas, that I was to pass my latter days with you, gives me the same sting of regret as formerly. You cannot imagine with what satisfaction I heard lately of the Count de Bouffler's marriage: I hope it is as advantageous for him, as it is represented to me. I foresee, that he and his family are to be the consolation of your future life: I hear him mightily well spoken of; and as he is in every respect put into a flourishing situation by your care and attention, you will better be able to compensate the injustice of fortune in one particular, by her favour in another.

I salute and embrace M. De Pont de Ville for the part he has had in this transaction.

I hope, dear Madam, you will throw me at the Prince of Conti's feet. My sense of his goodness to me will be indelible, as well as my personal regard to him.

L'Abbé Le Bon gave me lately an account of the prince's bene-

volent disposition, in taking himself a journey to Trie, that he might accommodate some quarrels, which Jean Jacques had had with some of his neighbours.

I think that this philosopher now speaks less of his return to this country; which indeed does not well suit him, as he would here be neither courted nor persecuted. He does wellto enjoy his pension at a distance from us.

I could wish it were proper for me to present my respects to Madame De Luxembourg; but I am told that I have incurred her displeasure by my unlucky quarrel with the above-mentioned personage.

This is the only subject of regret it leaves me; and I could wish to be justified in her eyes, as I am in those of all Europe. Nobody can have a greater regard for her than I have, nor a greater desire of recovering her good graces. I hope Madame De Mirepoix allows me the honour of saluting her, as also Madame De Bussi, whose situation, I am sorry to hear, is not more agreeable than formerly.

The Archbishop of Toulouse, I am told, has distinguished himself at the head of a commission for examining into the regulations and laws of convents; and it is resolved that henceforth nobody shall be allowed to take the vows before one-and-twenty years of age. In that case, this prelate will be the greatest reformer that has arisen since Luther.

I beg my compliments to him, as well as to the Bishop of Lavaur, whose funeral panegyrics I have read with some regret:

they were so well wrote, that I wished to see his pen employed on some better subject. I am in Madame De Barbantane's debt, and shall answer her in a few days, as soon as I have fully executed her commission. Be so good as to mention my name to her, and to Madame De Vierville. I bid you adieu, dear Madam, and kiss your hands, with all the sincerity possible. I should be sorry to forget Miss Becket on this occasion.

DAVID HUME, TO THE MARCHIONESS DE BARBANTANE.

London, 24th May, 1768.

I SHOULD not have delayed so long, dear Madam, the answering your very obliging letter, had I not thought it essential to answer a part of it to your satisfaction. I mentioned to Lord Ossory the debt due by poor Tavistock to M. De Puységur: he told me that he knew of it already, that Lady Tavistock had told him of it, and desired him to remit the money; but his indolence and forgetfulness had hitherto prevented him; he would however give immediately orders to that purpose: these immediate orders did not follow immediately; but at last, by my reminding him frequently, the affair is executed. The twenty Louis-d'ors are sent over to M. Panchaud the banker; and M. De Puységur has nothing to do but send for them to Panchaud, or draw upon him to that amount, only

desiring him to place the money to the account of M. Coutts, banker, in London. I hope, when you give this information to M. De Puységur, you will not fail to let him know how much I desire a place in his memory.

Nothing gives me greater pleasure than your telling me, that I am not forgot by my friends at Paris. I cannot but recollect with great satisfaction, the agreeable society which I enjoyed there; and shall ever reflect on it as the happiest period of my life. I have not, however, any great prospect at present of settling there, as once was my intention, though I hope still to pay you frequent visits. I find the chains, which attach me to this country, multiply upon me. The King has given me a considerable augmentation of my pension, expressing at the same time his expectation, that I am to continue my history. This motive, with my habits of application, will probably engage me in this undertaking, and occupy me for some years.

I am glad you see, from time to time, our friend at the Temple. I find by her letters that she is not quite happy in her present condition, and yet her farther elevation would be the source of greater chagrin to her. I hear she has found an advantageous marriage for her son, which will be a real and durable satisfaction to her. I am told the little Count is well spoken of, and our friend, I find, is much in conceit with him; which is a very happy turn; for she used not formerly to be over-partial in his favour. Be so good as to inform her of the King's goodness to me.

I hear less mention, than formerly, of the establishment of your young princess; which I wish earnestly, on your account. Your way of life is much too confined for a person accustomed to so much liberty. But the solidity of your character enables you to enjoy yourself in any situation, and to accommodate yourself to every course of life. I should only be afraid that, were I to pay you a visit at Paris, I should have much more difficult access to your company than formerly. Pray, is not your son a very fine young gentleman? He promised very much when I saw him; and in spite of the partiality of a mother, I can almost rely on your judgment.

There have been this spring in London a good many French gentlemen, who have seen the nation in a strange situation, and have admired at our oddity. The elections have put us into a ferment; and the riots of the populace have been frequent: but as these mutinies were founded on nothing, and had no connexion with any higher order of the state, they have done but little mischief, and seem now entirely dispersed. I believe most of your countrymen return very happy, that they are born under a government not liable to these inconveniencies; which is a fortunate way of thinking. You ask me about M. De Chatelet: he lives very splendidly; behaves obligingly to all the world; and would, I believe, be very popular, were it not for the prepossession entertained that he does not like us. The truth is, no foreign minister has much reason to like us. We are so taken up with our own cabals, and projects, and societies, that scarce any of

them ever get into intimacy with any of us; and they leave the country, after having been strangers in it for several years. M. De Guerchy overcame these difficulties as much as possible, and was beloved. I hear some people are displeased with the present ambassador, for speaking, as they pretend, disrespectfully of M. De Guerchy's memory.

Allow me to take this opportunity of renewing my compliments to Madame De Vierville and Madame De Mori: and I beg of you to believe me, with the most sincere attachment,

Dear Madam,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

London, 23d December, 1768.

I AM somewhat ashamed, dear Madam, but still more sorry, to be obliged to address you by letter, instead of enjoying your conversation, as I flattered myself all last autumn. My intended journey was every day delayed, for different reasons, which appeared, each of them, at the time, solid and invincible; but it would be difficult for me to explain the amount of the whole. The truth is, I have, and ever had a prodigious reluctance to change my place of abode; and though

this disposition was more than counterbalanced by my strong desire of enjoying your society, it made me perhaps yield more easily to the obstacles which opposed my journey. For this reason I shall say nothing of my future intentions; lest I expose myself to the same reproach of irresolution, in case I do not fulfill them. But I own I have, during a long time, felt the strongest inclination of hearing from you; and knowing your situation with regard to health and domestic satisfaction. The Count, I hear, was to be married some weeks ago: I am told, that all your friends are extremely pleased with the alliance; and that the young couple were to come home and live with you; a project likely to turn out much to their advantage, and your satisfaction. I flatter myself that this arrangement will tend very much to give you more liberty in the disposal of your time—the circumstance which seemed to me chiefly wanting to your enjoyment of life: some constraint must still remain; but I hope that, besides being alleviated by your friendship for the object, it will now also admit of intervals and relaxation. It will be difficult for you ever to be so happy as I wish you; and I am more difficult to please, than you yourself would be with regard to every circumstance of your situation.

I think it my duty to inform you concerning all your friends in this country. The Bedford family seem to be comforted entirely, from the shock they received on poor Lord Tavistock's death: some even reproached the Duke with being too easily comforted: but it proceeded from the ardency of his temper,

which always takes itself to the present object without reserve. He begins to apprehend that he is losing his eyes again, and that he has endured a very cruel operation to no purpose.

Lord and Lady Holdernesse live elegantly and sociably, as usual: My Lord is only not quite contented in being left out of the present plan of administration, and not to have any occupation. Lady Emily is their great consolation, and is a fine girl; but will not prove so handsome as we expected.

I believe the Duchess of Grafton was your acquaintance: her adventure cannot be unknown to you. It is not doubted but, as soon as she is divorced, she will marry Lord Ossory; and the Duke, his kept mistress, who was very lately a lady of the town. These are strange scenes; and very contrary to your manners.

Lord Beauchamp is married to a young lady of family and fortune, who has an entire complaisance for Lady Hertford: so that this incident, which she always dreaded, will no wise interrupt their correspondence. Lord Beauchamp makes a very good figure in Parliament; but the young people cannot endure him, on account of his want of sociableness: you remember, there was the same complaint against him at Paris; and it is a pity, considering his amiable manner in other respects.

There was a report here, which got into the newspapers, that I was going over to France in my former station: but it never had the least foundation. The truth is, I would rather pay you a visit voluntarily, than in any public character; though indeed

the prospect of affairs here is so strange and melancholy, as would make any one desirous of withdrawing from the country at any rate. Licentiousness, or rather the frenzy of liberty, has taken possession of us, and is throwing every thing into confusion. How happy do I esteem it, that in all my writings I have always kept at a proper distance from that tempting extreme, and have maintained a due regard to magistracy and established government, suitably to the character of an historian and a philosopher! I find on that account my authority growing daily; and indeed have now no reason to complain of the public, though your partiality to me made you think so formerly. Add to this, that the King's bounty puts me in a very opulent situation. I must, however, expect that, if any great public convulsion happen, my appointments will cease, and reduce me to my own revenue: but this will be sufficient for a man of letters, who surely needs less money both for his entertainment and credit, than other people.

A-propos to such people, we hear that our friend Rousseau made an elopement from the Prince of Conti, and fled into Dauphiny. He tired there, and offered to return to Mr. Davenport, but is now retired to Dombes, where he will not long remain. He is surely the most singular and most incomprehensible, and at the same time the most unhappy man that ever was born. I have seen the copy of a paper, which he wrote in Dauphiny, containing the sentiments of all mankind with regard to him. It is certainly genuine: some marks of genius, with a

great many of vanity, prove it to be no counterfeit. Did he elope from the Prince of Conti, without making a quarrel with you or his benefactor? It seems he is determined not to return to you.

I beg you to lay me at the Prince of Conti's feet, and to express my inviolable regard and attachment to His Highness. May I also beg you to remember me to M. De Vierville and M. De Barbantane. I hope Miss Becket is well, and has the same passion, but more moderate, for you. Adieu, dear Madam, Believe me to be ever yours, with the greatest sincerity.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

5th of May, 1769.

I WAS yesterday, dear Madam, very much alarmed, by a piece of intelligence, which I received from Madame De la Vaupalliere: that having engaged your daughter-in-law to submit to inoculation, the success had appeared very doubtful: she had a great number of pustules; her face was much covered with them, her life was not out of danger, and the consequences in general were much apprehended. You may easily imagine to what degree I interest myself in this event. I foresee that, if any sinister accident happen, you will be in-

clined, besides regretting a person, to whom you are so much attached, to blame yourself for an advice the best founded in reason and experience. As the issue must now be perfectly known, I beg to be informed of it: I cannot forbear hoping, that your anxiety has exaggerated the danger; and that all will still end happily.

We have had this winter two countrywomen of yours, very amiable persons, to whom I pay my court frequently, Madame De Chatelet and Madame De Damas. The manners of the latter are generally taking, and she is very popular: the former, with a very superior merit, is better calculated for every situation, than that in which she is at present engaged, namely representation, in such a crowd as this town affords, and in such a hurry as everywhere presents itself: her good sense, and her frank easy humour, with her utter inability to dissemble, render her the best companion of the world in private society. I only regret in these two ladies that, having never had much commerce with you, I have not the satisfaction of hearing your name mentioned among them so frequently as I should be inclined to.

But I am afraid, dear Madam, of entertaining you with indifferent subjects, perhaps at a time when all your attention is engaged in the most interesting event: I shall therefore conclude; but with representing to you, that there was more sharpness in your last letter, than I ever thought should have passed between us. Certainly, I was not blameable in ascribing to you a great desire of liberty and leisure, both because that sentiment is natural, and

even laudable; and because I am myself so much possessed with it, that I think nothing can be compared to these blessings. In all cases, my mistake was innocent; and as I never meant to offend you, I doubt not, but, upon reflection, you will again restore me to your good graces, on which I set so high a value, and which, on that account, it is impossible for me ever to deserve to forfeit.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Edinburgh, 25th of January, 1772.

I AM truly ashamed, dear Madam, of your having prevented me in breaking our long silence; but you have prevented me only by a few days: for I was resolved to have writ to you on this commencement of the year, and to have renewed my professions of unfeigned and unalterable attachment to you. While I was at London, I had continual opportunities of hearing the news of Paris, and particularly concerning you; and even since I had settled here, I never saw any body who came from your part of the world that I did not question concerning you. The last person to whom I had the satisfaction of speaking of you, was Mr. Dutens. But there were many circumstances of your situation which moved my anxiety, and of which none but yourself could give me information. You have

been so good as to enter into a detail of them, much to my satisfaction; and I heartily rejoice with you, both on the restoration of your tranquillity of mind, which time and reflection have happily effected, and on the domestic satisfaction which the friendship and society of your daughter-in-law afford you. These last consolations go near to the heart, and will make you ample compensation for your disappointments in those views of ambition which you so naturally entertained, but which the late revolutions in France might perhaps have rendered more full of inquietude than satisfaction.

For my part, I have totally and finally retired from the world, with a resolution never more to appear on the scene in any shape. This purpose arose, not from discontent, but from satiety. I have now no object but to

Sit down and think, and die in peace—

What other project can a man of my age entertain? Happily, I found my taste for reading return, even with greater avidity, after a pretty long interruption: but I guard myself carefully from the temptation of ever writing any more; and though I have had great encouragement to continue my history, I am resolved never again to expose myself to the censure of such factious and passionate readers as this country abounds with. There are some people here conversible enough: their society, together with my books, fills up my time sufficiently, so as not to leave any vacancy; and I have lately added the amusement of building, which has given me some occupation.

I hearken attentively to the hopes you give me of seeing you once more before I die. I think it becomes me to meet you at London; and though I have frequently declared that I should never more see that place, such an incident, as your arrival there, would be sufficient to break all my resolutions. I only desire to hear of your journey as soon as it is fixed, and as long before it is executed as possible, that I may previously adjust matters so as to share the compliment with others of my friends, particularly the Hertford family, who may reasonably expect this attention from me.

Can I beg of you to mention my name to the Prince of Conti, and assure him that the world does not contain any person more devoted to him, or more sensible of the obligations which he imposed on me? I suppose Madame De Barbantane is very agreeably situated with her pupil, the Duchess of Barbantane. Will she be pleased to accept of the respects of an old friend and servant? I beg to be remembered to Madame De Vierville. If Miss Becket be still with you, I wish to make her my compliments. I am, with the greatest truth and sincerity,

Ever yours,

DAVID HUME.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Edinburgh, 7th of January, 1775.

DEAR MADAM,

I VENTURE to write you a letter on the new year, in confidence of your goodness, that you will forgive me my long and very blameable silence.

As often as any of my acquaintance arrived from France, who I thought had a chance of giving me any information, I never failed to find them out, and make inquiries concerning you. But of late I have not been so fortunate as to meet with any satisfaction on that head; and I could no longer forbear applying to yourself, to learn every circumstance that interests me so much. There are certain seasons allotted to sinners for making their peace with Heaven. May I hope that the new year will be equally propitious to me; and obtain me, on my sincere penitence, the pardon of all past offences? I often think of you with the same attachment as ever; and though nothing extinguishes all passions so effectually as despair, I do not find that my wish to enjoy again your amiable society, is a whit abated by that consideration, though aided by absence, time, and distance. Give me the consolation to think, that, though unworthy, I still retain some place in your memory.

I find by the public papers, that an incident has happened in the Royal Family, which, I know, could not fail to interest you. If it pave the way for your obtaining that end, which you long so naturally expected, and which from a very laudable fortitude you at last renounced, I shall rejoice. If it only rouze your sleeping hopes, it will serve to disturb that peace of mind, which is the chief, and, with health, the only blessing in human life. I would fain hope that your ideas of resignation are so fixed, as not to be disturbed even by this incident. I never write to you of public affairs, which are no object of concern between us: yet I cannot forbear expressing my joy, from the general aspect of things as it appears to us at a distance, that your friend is likely to have a shining theatre opened to his virtues, which have too long been suppressed by the malignity of fortune. I congratulate you upon it. Durst I venture to address himself, I should also congratulate him. My profound regard to him, and my sense of his goodness, give me a title which I hope you will plead in my favour. But even to those who are placed at a distance, it must appear a beautiful and interesting spectacle, to see so firm and steady and uniform a conduct crowned at the last with the success which it has so well merited.

From so great an object to descend to myself, would form a very abrupt transition. I cannot, however, forbear informing you, that I am settled here in peace and tranquillity and opulence; and except that I am beginning to feel some of the

infirmities of old age, in all other respects my situation may pass for tolerable. I hope yours is better than tolerable, though to be perfectly desirable is never to be expected.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Edinburgh, 17th April, 1775.

YOUR entering, dear Madam, into so particular a detail of your situation, was very satisfactory and agreeable to me; and I give you my sincere thanks for it. I applaud extremely your way of thinking. It is both generous and discreet, and will contribute no less to your honour than your tranquillity of mind. I thought that the event you hint at, had been public and avowed. The lady I cannot recollect, though it is probable I did know her, either more or less. I should be sorry to see you even seemingly put on a level with such a person. Your letter came safely to hand, and untouched: it was conveyed under a frank of Lord Stormont's; and no private letters are ever opened here. I have observed your orders with regard to it.

You are mistaken, my dear Madam: I am sufficiently of an age to feel the decline of life, and I feel it sensibly. I have, however, been always and still am very temperate. The only debauches I ever was guilty of, were those of study; and even

these were moderate; for I was always very careful of my health, by using exercise. I own that this country does not entirely please me, particularly the climate. I sometimes entertain the notion of returning to France; but as I could not now, at my years, bear the tumult of Paris (and all provincial towns are unknown to me), I shall never probably carry this idea into execution.

You make me prick up my ears, and lend attention, when you speak of coming over to England. I beseech you, inform me some time before you put that design in execution. I should endeavour to meet you there; which would be much better than your taking so long a journey to so remote a part of the world, where there is little worthy your curiosity.

I have a nephew, a brother's son, who will pass through Paris some time in the month of June. I have given him orders to pay his respects to you. He is an officer of cavalry; and, in the interval of his duty, proposes to pass eight or nine months in a garrison town in France, for his improvement in the language and in his profession. Metz is the place fixed on. He has, as you will see, an agreeable figure; and if he could speak the language, his behaviour and conversation is very good; so that I doubt not but he will be acceptable to the good company of the place. But, in order to his reception, it will be necessary to have him recommended to the governor of the province, who, I hear, is M. Darmentieres, and to the governor of the town, M. De Conflans. The former I know but a very little; the second not

at all. I use the freedom to apply to you for procuring him letters of recommendation. Be so good as to ask them of any of your acquaintance, if the governors be not known to you. In case you should not be at Paris, when my nephew passes, I have directed him to leave a letter for you. When you receive it, be so good as to send him up the letters; and I have directed him to call again at your hotel in the Temple, where he may receive them. He will be so little time at Paris, and speaks the language so imperfectly, that I dare not recommend him to your more particular notice, though I am persuaded you would like him very much, upon farther acquaintance. He is a piece of a scholar too, and passes for a prodigy of learning in his regiment. I doubt not but he will make a figure in that respect among the young officers.

You never mention to me Madame Barbantane. Does she live with her pupil, and has she much satisfaction in that course of life? I beg my best respects to her.

DAVID HUME, TO THE COUNTESS DE BOUFFLERS.

Edinburgh, 20th of August, 1776.

THOUGH I am certainly within a few weeks, dear Madam, and perhaps within a few days of my own death, I could not forbear being struck with the death of the Prince of Conti, so great a loss in every particular. My reflection carried me immediately to your situation in this melancholy incident. What a difference to you in your whole plan of life! Pray write me some particulars; but in such terms that you need not care, in case of decease, into whose hands your letter may fall.

My distemper is a diarrhœa, or disorder in my bowels, which has been gradually undermining me these two years, but within these six months has been visibly hastening me to my end. I see death approach gradually, without any anxiety or regret. I salute you, with great affection and regard, for the last time.

DAVID HUME.

THE END.

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